

Christmas Service in Malang, December 25, 2014 (Thursday Evening)

Peace and grace in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 2:9-10

2:9 "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

2:10 "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

The church in Smyrna is in tribulation, poverty, slander, and prison, but they are rich spiritually.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

8:1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

8:2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.

8:3 For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing,

8:4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

8:5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

Their condition is the same as the churches of Macedonia's, namely being poor physically, but rich spiritually because they can give, even like doing that.

1 Timothy 6:17-18

6:17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

6:18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,

The warning to the rich is that they must be rich also in good works and mercy through giving.

It does not depend on physical wealth or poverty, but the heart that is sanctified from the will of money. We will be able to give whether we are rich or poor if our heart is sanctified from the will of money.

1 Timothy 6:19

6:19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

It is the same as storing up the treasure for the eternal life in heaven.

The facts found in being rich spiritually in good works and mercy are as follows.

1. Giving the time, energy, riches, thought, ability, and so on to God.
2. Returning the tithes and offerings of God.
Giving the tithes is not to get the blessing of God, but a confession that we have been blessed by Him.
The offerings are the thanksgiving that we have been blessed by God.

3. Giving to other people who are in need.

1 Timothy 5:8

5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

It starts from our family, the other members of Christ's body, and all people.

Galatians 6:9-10

6:9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

4. Giving our whole life to God through our service and ministry to Him up to the peak, namely worship prayer to Him.

2 Corinthians 8:5

8:5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

Matthew 2:1-2,10-11

2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,

2:2 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

2:10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.

2:11 And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

If we are rich in the good works and mercy, we will be the same as the wise men who came to worship Jesus who had been born as the King. They brought gifts, namely gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

We are celebrating Christmas tonight. Let us be rich in goodness, and mercy so that we can give to God, family, and other people, until we can worship the Lord as the King and reach the perfection.

Who are the wise men?

Deuteronomy 18:9-12

18:9 "When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.

18:10 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,

18:11 "or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

18:12 "For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you.

They are not fortune tellers or magicians who are hated by God.

Matthew 2:1

2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,

They came from the East. The East refers to the place from where the sun rises or the one of the Dayspring.

Luke 1:76-79

1:76 "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,

1:77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins,

1:78 Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us;

1:79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace."

God is also in the East. It refers to the place where God is and radiates His love to us.

Thus, the wise men are the people who are always with God or walk with Him until they are made perfect and lifted up to heaven together with Him.

There are three people who always walk with God as follows.

a. Enoch.

Genesis 5:24

5:24 And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

He walked with God until he was taken up to heaven.

Proverbs 3:32

3:32 For the perverse person is an abomination to the LORD, But His secret counsel is with the upright.

Walking with God means honesty as the gold. It refers to the characteristic of Father God. It begins from godly matters and the true teaching Word. We must take the risk to be honest, but God will be with us.

Titus 2:7

2:7 in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,

It will continue with honesty in marriage, finance, and confessing our sins. Afterwards, we can be honest in all things like

Enoch. We can say "yes" if "yes", and "no" if "no".

b. **Moses.**

Deuteronomy 34:5-6

34:5 So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

34:6 And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day.

Moses died according to the Word of God. It means that his life is also according to the Word. It is the same as offering the fragrant frankincense. The white color refers to the truth. **We must live in righteousness according to the Word, regardless of any risk we have to take.**

Jude 1:9

1:9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

The grave of Moses cannot be found. His dead body is fought by the Lord and Satan. Nevertheless, his dead body is resurrected by God so that Satan cannot snatch it because his life and death are according to the Word of God. He was resurrected in the body of glory to be lifted up to heaven.

This is a lesson for us. Satan wants to snatch the dead body. Moreover, our life is fought by the Lord and Satan. Let us live in righteousness and be shepherded well and correctly, so our life and death are still in the hand of God.

c. **Elijah.**

2 Kings 2:10-11

2:10 So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so."

2:11 Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Elijah was lifted up to heaven with the chariot and horses of fire. It means that he was lifted up to heaven in the fire of Holy Spirit.

The myrrh refers to the expensive or precious blood of Jesus. He must go and die on the cross like the myrrh tree that is cut. The blood comes out of His body, but He is resurrected and ascended to heaven to pour out Holy Spirit for us.

1 Kings 19:9-10

19:9 And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

19:10 So he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

Romans 12:11

12:11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

The fact found in offering the myrrh is **our faithfulness and fervency in spirit in doing our service and ministry to God** according to the priest's offices God has given us until the end.

Exodus 14:28

14:28 Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained.

Do not lose the fire, or else there is no fervency in spirit anymore.

The three wise men came from heaven as the witness of the birth of Jesus. Three witnesses are perfect. It means that Jesus is truly a perfect man coming from heaven, so He can save and perfect the sinners as well as ascend to heaven.

Philippians 2:8-9

2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

2:9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

Jesus is also rich in goodness and mercy. He is obedient to the point of death. He gives His soul. It means that He is expensive, beautiful and fragrant. He is obedient till the death, so He is lifted up to heaven.

If we are rich in goodness and mercy, we will be the servants of God like the wise men with honesty (gold), righteousness (frankincense), and faithfulness, fervency in spirit as well as obedience (myrrh) and get the power of lifting up like the three wise men and Jesus have been lifted up.

The results are as follows.

1. The merciful hand of God is able to lift us up from the lameness.

John 5:5-7

5:5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

5:6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"

5:7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

The lameness means unfaithfulness or no fervency in spirit anymore in doing the service and ministry to God.

The bed refers to marriage. The lameness in the marriage means the fall in sins concerning eating-drinking such as smoking, getting drunk, and drugs abuse, and the ones concerning marrying-being given in marriage or sexuality sin with all its kinds. The lameness in the marriage also means the destruction in marriage and children.

Nevertheless, the merciful hand of God is able to lift us up from the lameness and there is nothing impossible for Him.

2. The merciful hand of God is able to lift us up from the rottenness and destruction as long as we are obedient.

John 11:38-40

11:38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."

11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"

Martha was hard in her heart. She used her logic, so she could not be obedient when there was a command to take away the stone.

The Lord is able to change the rotten things into good and fragrant ones.

3. The merciful hand of God is able to lift us up from the fall and make all things beautiful.

Matthew 14:29-30

14:29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

14:30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

We are changed to be as glorious as Jesus is when He comes a second time; we are lifted up to heaven like Enoch, Moses, Elijah, and the Lord Jesus.

God blesses you.