

Prayer Service in Surabaya, May 26, 2014 (Monday Evening)

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

Revelation 1:17-18

1:17 *And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.*

1:18 *"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.*

John, the apostle fell at God's feet, means that he **worshipped with a crushed heart** that he felt God's right hand touching him and he **received three things** as follows.

1. "Do not be afraid", means that **there is no more fear** (it has been explained since General Service in Surabaya, May 11, 2014).
2. "I am the first and the last" (it has been explained since Bible Study Service in Surabaya, May 19, 2014).

"The first" refers to the initial love.

"The last" refers to the bridegroom love (the peak of love). "I am the first and the last" means **receiving God's love**.

3. "I am He who lives, and who was dead", means receiving **the power to overcome death** (it has been explained since Prayer Service in Surabaya, May 25, 2014).

This evening, we still study the third part, "I AM HE WHO LIVES, AND WHO WAS DEAD".

Jesus who was dead and who lives means Jesus died and rose to defeat the death (to take triumph over death), **to hold the key of death and the kingdom of death**.

Matthew 16:18-19

16:18 *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

16:19 *"And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

"the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" means winning over death.

Holding the key of death and the kingdom of death **means** closing the door of the kingdom of death and opening the door of the kingdom of Heaven for His church, or He is **giving the key of the kingdom of Heaven to us**.

There is a connection between the key of the kingdom of death and the key of the kingdom of Heaven.

The key of the kingdom of death is used to close it so that we will not go into it, while the one of the kingdom of Heaven will open the door of Heaven for all of us.

What is the key of the kingdom of Heaven?

Acts 14:22

14:22 *strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."*

To enter the kingdom of Heaven, we must through many tribulations. This is the key of the kingdom of Heaven. The key of the kingdom of Heaven is having a lot of tribulations with Jesus, or **bearing the cross**.

The cross has a connection with the perseverance in faith. Faith refers to the true teaching. Persevering in faith means **persevering in the true teaching**.

2 Timothy 4:1-2

4:1 *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:*

4:2 *"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

The contents of the true teaching are as follows.

- Convince, means disclosing the hidden sins, and we are able to realize, feel sorry, and confess our sins to God and others and we are forgiven from our sins. We are not punished or dead (we will not enter the kingdom of death).
- Rebuke, means rebuking to make us stop sinning. We often return to our sins after we have confessed them. This is why we need a rebuke to make us repent (to stop sinning and return to God).
- Exhort, means the advices to let us live in holiness and righteousness. Advices are also solutions to every problem.
If we live in righteousness and holiness, the solution will appear soon.

Never look for a solution that is not in accordance with the true Word!

A solution that is not in accordance with the true Word is a dead end, and it will end in death.

This is the connection between the teaching and the cross, because **teaching and cross cannot be separated**.

The key of the kingdom of Heaven starts from the perseverance in faith.

It means that the teaching comes first, and then the cross.

Luke 13:22-24, 29

13:22 *And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.*

13:23 *Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them,*

13:24 *"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.*

13:29 *They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.*

On verse 22, there is a **teaching**.

On verse 23, it is said that *"are there few who are saved"*, which means that there are only few who hold the key of the kingdom of Heaven, and many will get into the kingdom of death.

On verse 24, it is mentioned about the narrow gate, which refers to the **cross**. The teaching comes first (on verse 22), and then we can bear the cross, or enter through the narrow gate.

On verse 29, east, west, north, and south refer to the cross.

The true teaching has a connection with the narrow door, or the cross. Having perseverance in faith means persevering in the true teaching, which is **the extra power to undergo the cross, or the tribulations with Jesus**, and we will get the key of the kingdom of Heaven.

Without the true teaching, we will not be strong enough to bear the cross, or to be willing to bear it.

The practices of perseverance in faith are as follows.

1. 1 Thessalonians 3:2-5

3:2 *and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,*

3:3 *that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.*

3:4 *For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.*

3:5 *For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.*

To encourage means to give advices from the true teaching.

we would suffer tribulation refers to the cross.

The first practice of perseverance in faith is **not being shaken** when facing the tribulations and false teaching, but getting firmer instead.

1 Peter 1:6-7

1:6 *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,*

1:7 *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,*

If God lets us undergo the tribulation, it is not to make us failed, but to let us get firmer or durable, and our faith increases to the perfect faith, like a pure gold.

In the Tabernacle, the gold are in the Holy Place and Holy of Holiest. In the Court, the equipment was made of bronze.

The firm faith refers to the Holy Place.

The perfect faith refers to the Holy of Holiest.

The perfect faith can welcome Jesus's second coming in the glorious clouds and to enter the kingdom of Heaven.

Luke 18:8

18:8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?

If we have a strong and perfect faith, we deserve to welcome Jesus's second coming in the glorious cloud and we will enter the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the Kingdom of a thousand Years of Peace or the Future Paradise, until we enter the New Jerusalem, or the Kingdom of Heaven (**the door of heaven is opened by faith**).

2. Acts 13:43

13:43 Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

Perseverance in faith contains advises.

The second practice of perseverance in faith is **keeping on living in God's mercy**.

Romans 12:1-2

12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

by the mercies of God means that we have to live on God's mercy.

your reasonable service means the righteous service.

To keep on living in God's mercy means that we are able to present the reasonable/righteous service to God, because there are righteous services (like Abel's service, which was accepted by God) and the unrighteous services (like Cain's service, which was not accepted by God).

The characteristics of a reasonable/righteous/acceptable service to God are as follows.

- Presenting our lives to God.

The true service is not about seeking or asking, but giving our lives to God, starting from giving tithes and offerings (small offerings to God), and then we can give a greater offering, which is our lives, to Him.

The requirements to offer our lives are as follows.

- a. A **living** life, which is controlled by the Holy Spirit through the perseverance in General Service (The Golden Candlestick).

The proofs of a living life are as follows.

- **Romans 8:13**

8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Holy Spirit kills fleshy/sinful deeds, and we are able to live in righteousness and holiness.

If we live according to the flesh, we will die.

The first proof is we commit no sins.

- Holy Spirit will make us active, faithful and kind in services to God (if we are alive, we will be active).

- b. A **holy** life, which is controlled by the true Word through the Bible Study and Holy Communion Service (Table of Showbread).

John 15:3

15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

ἀγιος/clean means holy.

The Word that is spoken by Jesus means the Word, of which secrets are opened by the verse explaining other verse in the bible.

Without the teaching, we cannot be holy.

- c. An **acceptable** life, which is controlled by God's love (ἀγαπή This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased) through the perseverance in Prayer Service (Golden Altar of Incense).
We are controlled by God's love, so that we are able to love God more than anything else, and we can love others like ourselves.

The true service is giving a living, holy, and acceptable life to God, which is the service in the system of shepherding.

At the ancient time, people brought cattle to be slaughtered, skinned, chopped, and burnt. Now, in the system of shepherding, our flesh **is slaughtered, chopped** (there is no chance for the flesh to speak, because it is dammed) and **burnt**.

It indeed hurts our flesh.

If the flesh is not burnt, it will smell bad and fishy.

○ **Romans 12:2**

12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The characteristic of a reasonable service is transformation, or being burnt.

The slaughtered and chopped flesh (the first characteristic of a reasonable service) has to be burnt, and it will turn into smoke, which pleases God. **It means we have a life changing** (the greatest spiritual miracle).

In order to change, we have to undergo flesh sufferings.

What should be changed?

ἀνανεώσις/the renewing of your mind refers to the hard heart is changed into a good/gentle heart, which means as follows.

- a. Being able to distinguish which one is God's **will**, and which one is not.
- b. Being able to distinguish the righteous **teaching** from the false ones (distinguishing the true God from the fake ones).

When the Israelites were at the foot of Mount Sinai, they worshipped the golden statue of the lamb because Moses was up to the mountain for a quite some time. They made the golden lamb and said ἀγαπή This is god, that brought us out, amazing. Every one said ἀγαπή This is god's presence. Which one was true? This is the usefulness of the teaching. **Wherever there is a teaching, there is also God**. If there is no true teaching, God is not present.

If we are able to distinguish the true teaching from the false ones, we are able to hold firmly to the true teaching and strongly reject other ones. **Never give chance to other teachings! For example**, Eve gave the chance to listen to the wrong teaching. The serpent said ἀγαπή You shall not eat of every tree of the garden while God actually said ἀγαπή Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat.

There is a difference. If there is a difference, but we still listen to it, the exclamation mark will turn into a question mark. ἀγαπή Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die turns into a question (ἀγαπή which one is true, actually?).

The consequence is sinking, leaving the truth and accepting the unrighteous things. This is the danger. This is why we need to have a good conscience.

For example, if we have a good conscience, we will never give someone a poisonous food, not even a smelly food.

- c. Being able to distinguish the true **services** from the wrong ones.
If we have a good conscience, we don't need any directions to distinguish them.
- d. Being able to distinguish **everything** (marriage, work, and everything else) which is righteous from the unrighteous ones.

âFather Pong said âabout the teaching, the time will come that we can sense it even though the person does not say anything.â We will reach that level of sensitivity.â

If we are not just, we will be eaten.

Starting from now, we have to be just. Later, we will be **just and very sensitive**, cannot be shaken even for a little. We are not judging, but we know which one is correct.

We have to distinguish the God (the teaching), and we will be able to distinguish the services.

A testimony:

âWhen I was a teacher, every Saturday I invited my students to my former church (in the same teaching). After quite some time, about a year, my student went to other church and he said âWhy is the situation not pleasant, Sir? Your church is betterâ. He was a new Christian, and from other religion, but he was able to feel it. It is a shame for us, who have been Christian for many years, if we are not able to distinguish it.â

If we cannot distinguish, it is because of a hard heart. If our heart is not hard, we will know what is right and what is wrong.

If we are able to distinguish the true teaching and services from the wrong ones, we are able to distinguish everything else (about our work, school, marriage, communications, and everything else), and **we are able to do in righteousness, holiness, and perfection.**

- e. **Being obedient** until the flesh speaks no more. This is the peak of a good conscience. We will be an offering with a pleasant smell to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2

5:1 *Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.*

5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*

Jesus has been obedient, even to die on the cross and be a sweet-smelling aroma to God. We also have to be obedient to make ourselves be a sweet-smelling sacrifice for Him.

This night, we learn about the key of the Kingdom of Heaven. God holds the key of death and the kingdom of death. God defeated death and closed the door of the kingdom of death to bring us away from death and He gave us the kingdom of Heaven to make us live eternally with Him.

The key of the kingdom of Heaven is the cross.

To be able to accept the cross (the sufferings because of Jesus), there should be the true teaching (perseverance in faith). We are not shaken in tribulation, but we have a firm faith.

We have to live in God's mercy, namely we have to give a reasonable service by being in the shepherding (the flesh is chopped) and burnt to be a sweet-smelling aroma to God (we are obedient).

If there is a sweet-smelling aroma, the results are as follows.

a. **Philippians 4:18-19**

4:18 *Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.*

4:19 *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

The first result is God will present within us and supply all of our need according to His riches in glory. It means that it is not bounded by anything on earth, and nothing is impossible. Although we can do nothing, God will nurture us and He can give it to us.

A testimony:

âThere was a servant of God who built a church. The congregations were helping but it was not done. Then someone came, and through this man, everything was done.â

God can do anything that we can't think about, as long as there is a sweet-smelling aroma.

b. **2 Corinthians 2:14-15**

2:14 *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.*

2:15 *For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.*

The second result is God will lead us in triumph in Christ, which is a triumph over every enemy and problem, even the impossible ones.

- c. God will use us in the Revival of the Early Rain to spread the fragrance of Jesus as the Savior, and the Revival of the Latter Rain to spread the fragrance of Jesus as the King of kings and as the Bridegroom of Heaven.

Let our lives start from the good fragrance. Don't be a bad smell! If we smell bad, many people will go.

When Jesus comes to earth for the second time, we will be changed as glorious as Himself. We are raised up to the clouds. We enter the marriage supper of the Lamb (**the door of the marriage supper is open**), and we enter the **gate of Paradise** for a thousand years, until **the door of Heaven** is opened for us. We live forever and ever with God.

Let us give our life until it pleases God. It indeed hurts, but if there is the teaching or faith, we can be strong. We hurt because the flesh is chopped, slaughtered, and burnt, but we will smell good and God is present. God will never lie to us.

God blesses us.