

Prayer Service in Surabaya, September 24, 2014 (Wednesday Evening)

Preacher: Deacon Gideon Pakpahan

Peace and grace in the love of Jesus Christ. Good evening, let us listen to the Word of God. May the peace and grace from God be within us.

We return to **Revelation 2:8-10** about the **church in Smyrna**.

Revelation 2:8-10

2:8 *"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,*

'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

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.*

We have learned about the church in Smyrna, that God lets them undergo the tribulation or the experience of cross with Jesus (verse 9).

Why did God let the church in Smyrna undergo the tribulation or the experience of cross with God?

1 Peter 2:19

2:19 *For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.*

To let us **receive God's grace**.

The practices of receiving God's grace are as follows.

1. **Faith/believing** in Jesus who has died and risen.

Philippians 1:29

1:29 *For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,*

2. We are **willing to suffer with Jesus** because of holding on the true Word.

3. **2 Samuel 15:25-26**

15:25 *Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me back and show me both it and His dwelling place.*

15:26 *But if He says thus: 'I have no delight in you,' here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him."*

This is the story of Absalom (King David's son) who rebelled to King David that made him have to go out of his kingdom and he commanded Zadok to bring the ark of God back to the city.

The third practice that we will learn this night is to **look at the Ark of the Covenant**.

The Ark of the Covenant consists of two big parts as follows.

- **The mercy seat**, which was made of pure gold with two cherubim.
It refers to God the Trinity, The Lord Jesus Christ in the glory of the **Bridegroom of Heaven**.
- **The ark**, which was made of the acacia wood which was covered with pure gold.
It refers to the church of God which has been sanctified and perfected, which is also called as **God's bride**.

The Ark of the Covenant is the Bride Tidings or the true Word where we can see The Lord Jesus Christ in the glory of the Bridegroom of Heaven.

The daily practices of a living that sees the Ark of the Covenant or The Lord Jesus Christ in the glory of the Bridegroom of Heaven are as follows.

1. **Psalms 17:15**

17:15 *As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.*

The first practice is **to live in righteousness**.

We have to be righteous starting from our speech, thoughts, actions, and deeds.

We have to give thanks that we are in this teaching so that we can clearly see the destination of our lives.

A true life is started from the marriage, or the beginning of the marriage. We have to start the marriage in righteousness. If we live in the righteousness in the beginning of the marriage (by looking at the ark or the true Word), God will satisfy us. It means that we don't need to change our marriage partner.

Why do people change the marriage partner? Because they are not satisfied.

Why are they not satisfied? Because they don't live in righteousness in the beginning of the marriage. They don't look into the ark but only on the physical things (wealth, face) and these things can't make them satisfied.

The same thing happens in the marriage. If we don't look into the ark (but only looking at wealth or other physical things), we will not be satisfied and there will be cheating.

The youth, make sure that you look into the ark before you get married! Then you will be satisfied.

The same thing also happens in the shepherding. Whom do we look at? If we are only looking at a human and not the ark, we will never be satisfied. If we are in this shepherding by looking at the ark or God, we will be satisfied, that is we can keep on following and ministering God until His second coming.

In the fellowships, what do we look at? If we don't look at the ark, we will not be satisfied.

In the marriage, if the husband and wife are looking at the ark, there won't be any cheating and divorce.

Why do God's children do corruption? Because they don't look at the ark.

In schools, why do God's children cheat on exams? Because they don't look at the ark.

In any aspect of our lives, if we look into the ark or God, we will be satisfied and we don't need to find other satisfaction outside the Word.

2. **Psalms 123:1-4**

123:1 Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens.

123:2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, So our eyes look to the Lord our God, Until He has mercy on us.

123:3 Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us! For we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

123:4 Our soul is exceedingly filled With the scorn of those who are at ease, With the contempt of the proud.

The second practice is **always putting our hope in God's goodness and mercy**.

The characteristics of those who put their hope on God's goodness and mercy are as follows.

○ **Romans 2:4**

2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

The first characteristic is **repenting**, that is to stop sinning and return to God. It means that one can't even commit sins.

The example is King David.

When David slept with Bathsheba, he asked for forgiveness to God, repented, and stopped sinning. He wouldn't and couldn't commit sins. We can't commit sins although there are temptations or advantages.

○ **1 Peter 2:9-10**

2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

2:10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

The second characteristic is **being faithful** in services and ministry to God that is entrusted to us.

The position of the ministry is from God, so don't take it for granted. If we, as the priests, always feel that we live only

because of God's goodness and mercy, we will always be faithful in the services and ministry.
On the other hand, if we feel that the ministry comes from the pastor or our own ability, we won't be faithful.

3. Psalms 16:8

16:8 I have set the Lord always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

The third practice is **being strong and of good courage**.

It means as follows.

- Not being disappointed nor discouraged to God or the true Word when facing the tribulation, difficulties, and even something impossible.

The example is the church in Smyrna.

We are often disappointed because we are not helped nor healed and we left the true Word.

A testimony:

"Please pray for the graduates of Lempin-EI, especially me. I have graduated 8 years ago but I haven't been dispatched yet, but I am not disappointed. I keep on looking at God because I minister here not by looking at people. If I had looked at people, I would have gone back to my hometown long time ago.

Last night I told the church in Malang. Once, I drove from Ngawi or Walikukun, and I was scolded by the pastor in the middle of the way. After we reached the church in Malang, we had to hand over our phone to the pastor. It was one thirty in the morning. At that time, I didn't hand over my phone by myself, but I asked a friend to do it for me, because of carnal reason that I drove for a long way and I was very tired. Pastor's wife asked "Where is Gideon? Why doesn't he come to hand over his phone?" The pastor and his wife were very angry knowing that I asked my friend to hand over my phone. I was called and scolded very badly.

I thought, I had just driven until one thirty in the morning, yet I was still scolded. I said to the Pastor 'I would better go home.'

Yet he replied 'You have a hard heart! I give you a chance to pray.'

I give thanks to God that He put me here to look at Him, and not at the pastor. If I had only looked at the pastor, I would have already gone."

Revelation 2:10

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 world is getting more and more difficult until the peak of difficulty is in the age when the antichrist reigns over the Earth and we can do nothing. If we only depend on our intelligence, wealth, or anything, we can't survive.

Let's not be disappointed nor discouraged although we are facing the difficulties until the impossible ones. Let's keep on following and ministering God in the true Word until the finish line, that is until we receive the crown of life and we live eternally with God.

- Keeping on holding firmly to the true Word, although we are alienated or considered as an enemy.

A testimony:

"I was considered as an enemy by my fellows in Lempin-EI. I was really stressed and wanted to go home. However, I thought 'I was strong enough when I had problems. Why can't I withstand it when I am facing a friend?' I was eager to be strong and of good courage and God helped me. I can survive until this day."

4. Ezekiel 1:28

1:28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

The fourth characteristic is **to fall on our face and worship God**.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites couldn't stand God's glory that came to the Tabernacle and they fell and worship God.

Job 42:5-6

42:5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.

42:6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes."

We have to fall and worship God, both in the church like this evening, or individually. Falling and worshipping God means confessing that we can do nothing without God or the true Word.

Job lost all of his wealth in a blink. If he had not looked to God, he would have been stressed, crazy, and dead.

If we worship God, our eyes are only looking at Him, His eyes will also look at us with a merciful sight.

Psalms 123:1-2

123:1 Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens.

123:2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, So our eyes look to the Lord our God, Until He has mercy on us.

When we are facing a problems, even the impossible ones that we can't think of, don't focus on the problem, but on looking at God, His grace and mercy. God will look at us with a merciful sight.

The results are as follows.

- **Job 42:10**

42:10 And the Lord restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

The first result is God's merciful sight is able to restore our losses as what He did to Job.

- **Job 42:12**

42:12 Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys.

God restores us in doubly, physically and spiritually.

- **John 11:32-35**

11:32 Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

11:33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.

11:34 And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

11:35 Jesus wept.

Mary was left by Lazarus, the backbone of the family, for four days. It refers to an impossible problem. It is impossible to resurrect the dead, moreover he had been dead for four days.

The second result is God's merciful sight is able to erase the impossible things that we are facing.

If the youths feel that they don't have any future, they have to look at God. As long as we look at God worship Him a lot, He will erase our problems and make our lives more beautiful.

The last impossible thing is that God's merciful sight is able to change us, the sinful humans, even the rotten ones like Lazarus, to be as glorious as Himself and we will be able to welcome His second coming.

God blesses us.