

Prayer Service in Surabaya, February 04, 2015 (Wednesday Evening)

To coincide with Fasting Prayer Service

Peace and grace in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Good evening, let us hear the Word of God. Let the peace, grace, and joy of God be in the midst of us abundantly.

We are still learning **Revelation 3**.

In the arrangement of Tabernacle, **Revelation 2-3** refer to the seven blood sprinkles in front of the Ark of Covenant. They also refer to the seven letters that were sent to the seven churches of Gentiles, which refer to the last sanctification to the seven churches of Gentiles (the churches at the end of time) to make them perfect, without blemish like Jesus and be the Bride of Heaven who is ready to welcome His second coming in the glorious cloud.

The seven churches of Gentiles who underwent the blood sprinkles are as follows.

1. The church of **EPHESUS** (**Revelation 2:1-7**) (it has been explained since General Service, July 27, 2014 until General Service in Surabaya, September 07, 2014). The church of Ephesus **had to return to the initial love** to be able to get back to the paradise.
2. The church of **SMYRNA** (**Revelation 2:8-11**) who experienced tribulations, but God said to them **not to be afraid in the tribulations but be faithful until death** (it has been explained since General Service in Surabaya, September 14, 2014 until General Service in Surabaya, November 09, 2014).
3. The church of **PERGAMOS** (**Revelation 2:12-17**) who **has to leave the false teachings** (it has been explained since Bible Study Service in Surabaya, November 17, 2014 until General Service in Surabaya, December 28, 2014).
4. The church of **THYATIRA** (**Revelation 2:18-29**) who have to **experience the heart and mind purifying to the deepest mind** (it has been explained since General Service in Surabaya, January 04, 2015 until General Service in Surabaya, January 18, 2015).
5. The church of **SARDIS** (**Revelation 3:1-6**), who **experience a spiritual building** and **who is spiritually strong through being watchful** (it has been explained since General Service in Surabaya, January 21, 2015).

We still learning the fifth church, the church of **SARDIS**.

Revelation 3:1-3

3:1 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead."

3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.

3:3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

We have learnt that **Jesus took the form of 2 things** to the church of Sardis, 'He who has the seven Spirits of God' and 'He who has the seven stars' (it has been explained since Prayer Service, January 21, 2015 until General Service in Surabaya, January 25, 2015).

Jesus, who has the seven stars and seven Spirits of God, told the Word to the church of Sardis in order to let them **experience the spiritual building** and **be spiritually strong** (have an extra power), **SO THAT THEY ARE WATCHFUL**.

In verse 2 and 3, there are **2 things to watch** by the church of Sardis as follows.

1. Verse 2 'for I have not found your works perfect before God.'
The first thing to watch is **our service and ministry** (it has been explained since Bible Study Service in Surabaya, February 02, 2015).
2. Verse 3 'I will come upon you as a thief.'
The second thing to watch is **connected to Jesus' second coming**.

This evening we will learn about **BEING WATCHFUL TO OUR SERVICE AND MINISTRY**.

Revelation 3:2

3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.

On Monday, February 2, 2015, we have learnt about being watchful to our service and ministry, because the ministry of the church of Sardis was not perfect or not acceptable to God, it was dying, meaning **there was no more fire**.

We have learnt to be watchful to the ministry, that is to putting on the belt, having the light on, and being in the atmosphere of a feast.

This evening we will learn to be watchful in the connection with the ministry in **2 Corinthians 6:3-7**.

6:3 *We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed.*

6:4 *But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses,*

6:5 *in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;*

6:6 *by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,*

6:7 *by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,*

'in sleeplessness, in fastings' refers to being watchful in the connection to the ministry.

Being watchful in the ministry means **being watchful and fasting**.

This is the secret of God's servants.

"When Pastor Pong Dongalembe was dying, he asked me a thing. 'Are you fasting?' I replied, 'Yes I do.' He said, 'I do too, once a week, each Tuesday,' Fasting is good both physically and spiritually, so that our digestive system gets some time off. If we push it to always work, problems will come. This is the secret of God's servant. However, it is terrible knowing that there are a lot of people saying 'We don't need fasting anymore', including those who are in this teaching. This is really not good. We really need to use our time to fast."

There are **3 things that we can earn** from being watchful and fasting (in the connection to our ministry) as follows.

1. The first thing is '*We give no offense in anything*' '*in much patience, in tribulations*', which refers to **having flesh tearing** from all of its lusts and needs, so that we can be as follows.

- We can serve with all longsuffering in tribulations and ministry (in facing people or anything).
- We can serve with kindness and not look for anything.
- We can serve by the Holy Spirit, not by the power of the flesh.

No matter how strong a man is, he will become weaker as he grows older and then retires, but **we will not retire if we have the Holy Spirit**.

- We can serve by sincere love, without malice or any hidden intention.
- We can serve by the word of truth, although we are rejected or anything. We do not preach the Word by pleasing the congregation even though we preach the wrong thing.

The result is our ministry is not blamed, we will not be a stumbling block to the others, but it will glorify God and be a blessing for the others who are earnest, and many souls will be saved.

There is an exception for the envious ones. No matter what we do, those with bitter and envious heart will always consider us wrong.

This is the importance of praying and fasting, so that our ministry will not be blamed and be a stumbling block for others.

The lust of the flesh will make our ministry be blamed and a stumbling block for others.

"This is very clear. When I was sent to Medan, everyone said 'of course he will not make it, even a year will be good enough for him.' You know that this family in Medan is rich, people thought that I want something from them. If I had ministered because of my lust, I would have perished. If we pray and fast, our lusts are stopped and we can keep on ministering. If we do not fast, our lusts will grow and our ministry will move backward. We may get things, but the ministry will perish. We need to pray and fast."

Praying and fasting are the secrets of God's servant, but most of the time people reject them and as a consequence, their ministries are stopped.

"When I first came to Malang, I heard that people borrowed car to minister and visit the congregation. I did not agree because it was a lust. Why did not they use public transportation, why should they borrow a car? I stopped them, I was furious to them. I found out that the owner of the car said, 'I have only this car, but because of the ministry, I can let you use it and I will take public transportation,' This was really wrong. If I had not stopped them, they could have stopped ministering because they were pursuing their lusts."

We need to tear every lust so that our ministry will glorify God and be a blessing towards the others.

Through being watchful and fasting, **OUR LUSTS ARE CONFINED**.

2. **Matthew 6:17**

6:17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

The true fasting has two characteristics as follows.

- 'wash your face'.
A face refers to a heart.
Washing our face means having our heart being sanctified by the power of the Word.
- 'anoint your head'.
A head refers to a mind.
Oil refers to the anointment of the Holy Spirit.
Anointing our head means our mind is anointed by the Holy Spirit.

A true fasting gives a great chance for the Word and the anointment of the Holy Spirit (the true Word, which is sharper than any two-edged sword) to **sanctify our heart and mind** from evil and unclean lusts. These two things will make our ministry undisturbed.

This is the second thing that we get from being watchful and fasting.

If we have an evil and unclean lust, we will have evil and unclean deeds and speech.

Mark 7:21-23

*7:21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,
7:22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.
7:23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man."*

Evil and unclean lusts should be sanctified in order to have our deeds and speech sanctified, so that our whole life will be holy.

The result is we will be equipped with the ministry and gifts of the Holy Spirit from God, and we can use them in the building of Christ's body. This is the connection between fasting and ministry.

Ephesians 4:11-12

*4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

We are used in the building of Christ's body, ministry in the marriage, shepherding, fellowships, until the perfect body of Christ.

If we have got a ministry, **do not stop praying and fasting!**

If we keep on being watchful and fasting, **our holiness will increase**, and we will experience things as follows.

- **Our ministry will be firmer,**
- **The gifts of the Holy Spirit will be increased,**
- **God will use us for more,**
- We will have **a more beautiful life.**

Not being willing to fast will make a God's servant leave his ministry because he cannot stand it.

Remember! Ministry and the gifts of the Holy Spirit is a beautiful robe.

If God uses us, we have the beautiful robe.

If we pray and fast, it may be hard for the flesh, but our life is getting more and more beautiful.

If our ministry is getting firmer, the congregation can also feel it. If the shepherd is firm, the congregation can feel whether his shepherd is righteous or not. The congregation has been together with his shepherd for years but they are not bored even they get firmer in the shepherding. This also happens with the other ministries.

On the contrary, if we are not holy, we will lose the beautiful robe and we will be naked.

For those who have been ministering (having a beautiful robe), let's minister more earnestly and take your time for fasting in

order to make your ministry firmer, and holier, our gifts improve, God use us more, and our lives become more beautiful.

Through being watchful and fasting, we **KEEP OURSELVES FROM GETTING NAKED**.

3. Mark 2:19-22

2:19 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast.

2:20 But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.

2:21 No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse.

2:22 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins."

"As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.' Many people interpret this verse as 'we do not need to fast', since it is written 'Can the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them?' People often think that we (who are in the teaching of the Bride Tidings) do not need to fast because we have the bridegroom with us. If we always have the bridegroom with us, we will not have problems. Since we have problems, it means we are separated from God. God was on the mountain and there was someone below who had a leper. God went to the heaven and we are on earth, separated from Him. This is a chance for us to fast until we are reunited with God and at that time we do not need to fast anymore. Don't misinterpret this verse, but let this verse be opened for you."

The third thing that we will get is **a renewal** so that we will not be bored in ministering.

God's servants need to have the renewal from a flesh human to a spiritual one so that **their ministry is always renewed**.

"I, as a God's servant, always experience this. When I took a fasting with the congregation, even more with other God's servants, I felt that my ministry was renewed and I became fervent in spirit again."

There is a connection with the wine. If our ministry is renewed, **our marriage will also be renewed**. In **1 Corinthians 7**, 'Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer' which means husband and wife are separated for a time to fast and renew the wine in the marriage. This is the **secret of a marriage**.

'and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control' means that there are times for us to fast by ourselves, and there are times to stick back, because fasting means a private relationship with God without a disturbance from other people.

There are 2 kinds of renewal from a fasting as follows.

- Verse 21 refers to a renewal of an old garment.

There are a lot of old garments in the ministry, which means that there are a lot of God's servants who keep on falling on sins to the peak of sins (the sins concerning eating-drinking and the sins of marrying and giving in marriage).

If we pray and fast, our old garments are renewed and we will have a new garment, **a garment of righteousness and holiness**, a garment of ministry.

If we pray and fast, our garment will always be renewed until they become a white shining garment, a garment of a bride.

The garment of ministry is important, this is why Exodus 28 describes about it. Even after having a garment, we need to have a righteous and holy one.

- A renewal of an old wineskin.

We use a wineskin to hold wine, like a heart which holds anything.

A renewal of a wineskin refers to **a renewal of heart**, from a hard heart to **a new heart**(gentle).

James 3:11-12

3:11 Does a spring send forth freshwater and bitter from the same opening?

3:12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

A strong heart is the source of the things as follows

- Fresh water, which refers to those who have a bland heart, easily being disappointed, discouraged, or proud, and deny God and leave the ministry.
We should not be proud or disappointed but we should always give thanks to God.
- Bitter water, which refers to a bitter heart, hatreds without reason, envy, or anything that separates the body of Christ.
- Salty water, which refers to the pile of salt in Sodom and Gomorrah, or the sins to the peak of sins(the sins concerning eating-drinking and the sins of marrying and giving in marriage). They lead to the building of the body of Babylon, the fake church, the bride of Satan which will be destroyed.

Through being watchful and fasting, our hard heart can be changed to be a gentle one, and we **CAN HOLD THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

The results are as follows.

- We will have peace in the middle of the stormy world, like Jesus who was sleeping in the middle of the storm. Our ministry will be easy and light.
If we keep sins (we have a fresh, bitter, or salty water), we will dry and our ministry will be hard.

Matthew 11:29-30

11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

If our ministry is easy and light, our marriage and our lives will be too. If our ministry is easy and light, we will not abandon it.

"If our life is easy and light, we will not be bored and want to die. We will ask to live until Jesus' second coming. Do not be like Elijah who asked for his death. Be careful, even Elijah could ask for his death."

- We have the sweet wine(the Holy Spirit), we have the heavenly happiness in the middle of difficulties. It is ordinary to be happy when we have a lot of money. If we have the heavenly happiness, we can be happy even though we do not have money (it is beyond human's mind).

Hopefully we can experience it. Do not mock, if you do, you will end.

"The Word says 'We do not live from money'. There was someone who said 'How is that even possible? I earn tens of millions.' He is a high-ranked employee. One day, God let it happen to him, he had problems and he spent all of his salary until he had nothing. Fortunately he came and confessed 'I mock the Word. When you said we do not live from the salary, I did not believe. I have had nothing for these three months.' I asked him 'How can you live?' He replied 'This is a real experience that I live from God and not from my salary.' God then helped him. A high-ranked employee sold his merchandise until evening by a bicycle, even his colleagues were ashamed of him, but he was not. Do not mock the Word! Fortunately God has helped him.

I believe that the sweet wine can give us happiness in the middle of troubles. Even though we do not have any money, we have problems with the marriage or anything, we can still be happy. The heavenly happiness does not depend on the condition of the earth. Let's surrender everything to God. Maybe our marriage is bitter, our financial condition is not good, let's ask God to give us the wine so that we can live happily in the middle of our problems. Maybe as a wife, you are in problems. Do not rebel, but say 'fill me with Your wine, oh God.' Husbands should say the same thing, 'fill me with Your wine, oh God.'"

The wine will get sweeter and sweeter until one day we enter the marriage supper of the Lamb when Jesus comes for the second time.

- The last result, the Holy Spirit is able to weep our tears by creating miracles for us.

Zechariah 4:6-7

4:6 So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts.

4:7 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"'

- a. The Holy Spirit is able to solve all impossible problems(a great mountain can become a plain). Everything will be done and our tears are wept.

- b. If God has made the great mountain becomes a plain, we can look forward, which means God will give us a successful and beautiful future with Him.
- c. If a great mountain become a plain, we can follow and minister God to the finish line, until we are dead or His second coming, we will not stop in the middle.

The last miracle, we are changed as glorious and perfect as God, and we are lifted up high together with Him forever and ever.

Let's be earnest. Praying and fasting (being watchful) are indeed hard for the flesh, but God will improve our ministry.

- 1. Our ministry will glorify God and be acceptable to others.
- 2. As we are sanctified, our lives are getting more and more beautiful, God will use us more, and,
- 3. There will be renewals, miracles happen, and the Holy Spirit will be poured upon us.

Let's minister, not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of Holy Spirit. We ask for God's Spirit to be poured upon us. This evening, we ask for a wineskin to hold the Holy Spirit, which is a sweet wine. We do not hold the fresh, bitter, or salty water.

God blesses us.