



THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD

MAY 28, 2017

Living Faith Chapel, Calgary (Solution Center)

WORD FOR THE WEEK

FINISHING WELL IN THE USE OF OUR GIFTS & MINISTRY

TEXT: 2 Timothy 4:5-8

We bless the name of the Lord because it is another day of service in His house, and we are grateful to Him for all He does in our lives and in the lives of our loved ones. It is the last Sunday in the month of May. So let us appreciate Him this morning for seeing us through the end of the month. This morning's message is a continuation of our theme for the month – "Fulfilling Your Call."

Paul at the end of his life could look back with an assurance that he had finished well. Like Paul, we have each been blessed with a grace/gift/purpose. Each person is uniquely endowed to fulfil a purpose and add value to his/her world. To find fulfilment in our journey of life, we must identify that grace and what God wants to use us to accomplish for His Kingdom/man that He has created. We must then begin to apply the gift for the purpose it was given. A day of reckoning will come when we must give account - that day will determine if we have finished well. Whether we receive a "well done good and faithful servant" or whether it is "depart from me ye workers of iniquity" depends on what we do with these graces and ministries that God has endowed us with.

There were various components to Paul's finishing well and these are the components we shall be examining today as we also run our race with the purpose of finishing well.

(A) PAUL OPERATED IN THE GRACE OF GOD & MADE IT TO HEAVEN

Not all that use the gifts get to heaven - there will be a lot of surprises. This will not be our portion. (*Matthew 7:21-24*) The operation of the gift should not be mistaken as divine approval of our lives. Operation of the gifts is not an endorsement of our lifestyle or ways. "Success" in ministry is not an endorsement of our life. Balaam was a backslidden prophet but God spoke through him. The old prophet in (*1 Kings 13:18-22*) was a liar and deceiver but he still prophesied the will of God. The High Priest Caiaphas that was the leader of those wanting to kill Jesus also prophesied. (*John 11:48-51*). The gifts and callings of God are to bless His church and they are without repentance. (*Romans 11:29 -For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*) We need to deal with any besetting sin. Samson's besetting sin was harlots. What is that besetting sin that you need to deal with (*Hebrews 12:1-4*). Paul himself identified that self-discipline is required in ministry. (*1 Corinthians 9:24-27*); (*Romans 12:1-2*).

(B) THE MASTER PROFITED FROM PAUL'S MINISTRY/GIFT

We should ask ourselves: "How am I profiting the Master?" "Am I taking up space?" "How is my life impacting others?" "Am I adding value to God's house or to those around me?" (*Matthew 25:19-25*). God expects to profit from the gifting He has placed in us. (*1 Corinthians 4:2*; *Luke 13:6-7*; *1 Corinthians 12:7*). Examples of profit: Your smile as an usher gladdening the heart of someone; your good voice lifting someone in the presence of God; Your visit can make a difference in someone's life; Your encouragement can give someone the reason to continue to live. The business of God profited because some people made their giftings/grace available (*Acts 6:7*). Paul could tell Timothy this because looking back at the end of his life he saw the accomplishments for God. What will we have to say? - *2 Timothy 4:5-7*. The man who buried the talent had a bad attitude - he was lazy; he was good at making excuses; he was not concerned if his master made profit; he was selfish; he lacked proper understanding of his master etc. Is this you? Are the same things hindering us? We need to check our attitude.

(C) PAUL ALSO PROFITED FROM HIS MINISTRY/GIFT

From our text, Paul had a crown(s) to show for his effort. God expects us to profit as well from the exercise of the gifts whether now or in eternity (*1 Corinthians 13:1-3*). From the text in *Matt. 25*, the man who buried his talent got no reward- he did not profit because he did not use his talent. However, there will be others who minister in one area or the other who will not get rewarded. This will not be our portion! There will be pastors, ushers, choir members, encouragers, givers etc. who will get to heaven and have no crowns or rewards. Why? Because there is a vehicle that makes the operation of the gifts rewarding to the operator (*1 Corinthians 3:12-15*). That vehicle is the character of God because God is love (*1 John 4*). Every work that is not driven by love will be destroyed by fire. To profit in service, we must take on more and more of the nature/character of God. There must be character growth/development. There must be more of God and less of flesh - He must increase and we must decrease. God is Love and the attributes described are the attributes of God (*1 Corinthians 13:4-7*).

NOTE: If you have been blessed by our Word for the Week or inspired in any way by them, please let us know by sending an email to The Pastor at pastor@rccglfc.org