**The Answers of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd RUTC:**

**Paul’s Discipleship Training (2 Timothy 2:1-7) 03/22/2020**

It is said that the spread of the coronavirus will be at its climax this week. Whether it was because the focus was on the thousands of deaths from the flu, or if it was because of the thought that America would be exempt and okay, but it is too late to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Now, individuals need to take care of themselves and stay at home to refrain from further affecting the public.

**However, as said during the Wednesday service, our church members need to make this time of disasters as a time of four opportunities. (**opportunity to create a deep time with God, opportunity to achieve maturity in faith, evangelism opportunity, opportunity to make true oneness). **There is something God truly desires from us in these times.** It is for me to stand as a true disciple in these times of tribulations, and to make it into an opportunity to raise true disciples. Continuing from last week, this is the message that will be shared from today’s passage. Paul wrote the last bit of his life in 2 Timothy as he was in prison. When 2 Timothy was written, the early church members were being severely persecuted under the Roman Emperor. The colosseums that are in each region in Italy were all locations where early church members were killed. The Bible states that the disasters of the last days are God’s warning, and these disasters now bring those thoughts to mind. If we do not share the correct gospel, we cannot stop the disasters of the world.

**The people who risked their life and shared the gospel during those times are called the disciples.** The Bible talks about numerous tribulations, but America has yet to experience such tribulation. May this become an opportunity to hold onto God’s absolute covenant, to pray, and to be raised as a true disciple in this difficult time of tribulation. How did Paul train Timothy, whom he loved, as a true disciple of Christ?

**1. It is training to become stronger within the grace of Christ (verse 1).**

**1) Church members were endlessly persecuted and faced with tribulations in the church history of the past. It is the same even now.**

Do not merely wait for the problem to pass by quickly. Problems (personal, family, age) will continue, nor will these viruses end here. If you make a great effort to find ways to survive alone, you will become an incredibly selfish person. The four different types of people from *La Peste (The Plague)* by Albert Camus eventually come together and overcome the pest, however, that is not the answer either.

**2) There is a need for the government and the medical community to prepare differently in itself. Then what should we, as church members, do?**

Verse 1 says to train to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" when all tribulations and sufferings come. What is most dreadful when problems of any sort come? The psychological and spiritual aspect is more terrifying than that of the physical. There will be fear and anxiety. It is a psychological panic. The spirit of darkness destroys the faith of the believer at that time.

**① When the flood of judgment was to come in the world, what was most important to Noah who was preparing the ark?**

Genesis 6:8 states, “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.”

**② What is the beginning of grace that Paul states in the passage?**

This is the mystery of salvation that saved us from all curses, the curses of sin, curses of Satan and from eternal curses that started from Genesis 3. It is a blessing of grace that was allowed through Christ who loved us unconditionally, died for us, and through His resurrection (Ephesians 2:8-9). Do all prayer, devotion, labor and all through this grace. Even our small things will become a masterpiece. We should be able to confess like Paul at the end (1 Corinthians 15:10). May it become an opportunity to be in the depth and height of this grace.

**③** **What is the conclusion of those who enjoy this grace?**

This is the mystery of the church members who were victorious by faith and who stood as true people of God amidst the continuous tribulations in Revelations (Revelations 21:7). He has sealed us, who were saved by the grace of the cross of Christ, with the Holy Spirit (Revelations 7:4), holds onto us (9:4), and will give us victory to the end (Revelations 17:14). What is the Apostle John’s last confession as he saw the victorious church members? “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.” Train to enjoy this grace every moment and in every problem.

**2. Raise witnesses who enjoy this grace and raise other disciples (verse 2).**

**1) In times like this when we are unable to gather in the church, the early church had a true upper room (darakbang).**

Sharing simple information is not important. Look for the important people at this time. Look for people who are quietly having a hard time. The most important work is to find disciples and communicate at this time. Do the ministry that could not be done when life was too busy and hectic. Make three masterpieces a day. In hard times like this, even small interests will come strongly. You can call or video call. Doctor Luke was a personal doctor for evangelist Paul until the end (2 Timothy 4:11), and even wrote a letter for Theophilus whom he could not meet. That letter is the book of Luke and Acts.

**2) Focus on one person and do 24 hours.**

The passage of Timothy is a letter with messages of encouragement as Paul focused on one person, Timothy. Disciples are not about numbers. It is about a few, concentration, and continuation.

**3. There are three contents and missions that disciples must hold onto in order to stand as true disciples.**

**1) Train in all sufferings as determined solders (verse 3).**

Soldiers train to overcome all problems to protect themselves and others no matter what kind of problems come.

Do the spiritual warfare. All power of darkness must be crumble down.

It says that no soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs. Why? It says that it is to please his commanding officer.

**They are called faithful people.** The Bible talks about three different types of faithful people. A person who is faithful with a few things (Matthew 25:21), a person who is faithful with what has been entrusted to them (1 Corinthians 4:2), a person who is faithful to the point of death in tribulations (Revelations 2:10).

**2) Train to compete according to the rules (verse 4).**

It is not about merely competing hard, nor can it be done by using humanism to go ahead. **What does this mean? Put down my efforts, my standards, my level and follow the Word which is God’s rules.** That is why athletes should not look or listen to other things when competing. They must only concentrate. In this time, really train to live a life of concentration (refer to the Covenant Prayer concerning the 62 points of the life of an evangelist and the Covenant Prayer for the entire church).

**3) Train like a farmer who prepares today for the future (verse 6).**

When hardships come, do not look at the hardship itself. It will eventually pass. **In problems, look at what kind of attitude I had in the past and picture what kind of place of blessings I will be standing in.** You fall into despair and are deceived by the devil because you solely look at the present and the immediate problem itself. Hold onto the future covenant in problems and prepare as you look to the blessings and glory of the future.

**Conclusion** – We are not simply in a disaster. It is tribulation. It is the greatest discipleship training. May you stand as true disciples.