**Eternal Answer of 1st, 2nd, 3rd RUTC:**

**Evaluations Made Looking Toward Eternity (2Timothy 4:6-8) 12/29/2024**

This is the last Sunday of 2024. Dividing the year into 365 days and concluding it, then welcoming the new year, is the principle of creation and a blessing granted by God. When we conclude a year, we do so with a vision and determination for a new future.

**What kind of future is prepared for God's people? That is the eternal blessing(Spi**

**ritual Blessing)**. Among the blessings that believers should hold onto, this is the greatest of all. Of course, visible blessings related to the flesh and the world are needed during our time on earth. However, these can change at any time, are imperfect, and are fleeting (James 4:14, 1 Peter 1:24). We cannot live like unbelievers who focus solely on these things without the covenant of an eternal future. That would result in a meaningless life. Does the world look glamorous and enviable? This can lead to temptation, falling into sin, and drifting away from God (1 John 2:15-17). On the other hand, is the world fearsome and painful? This is what brings depression, panic disorders, and the tragedy of suicide (Matthew 10:28)

**There are blessings that God has given only to the believers and that He wants believers to continuously enjoy.** That is the eternal blessing. How much have we experienced and enjoyed this blessing? From this foundation, we must draw the true account of our lives.

**1. The blessings that saved believers already received from God are eternal.**

**1) The salvation we received by believing in Jesus Christ alone is eternal salvation (Romans 11:29, Philippians 1:6).** Through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, we have received the eternal blessing of atonement (Hebrews 9:12). That’s not all. In the resurrected Christ, we have also obtained eternal life (1 John 5:11-12). The moment we believed in and accepted Him as our Savior, the eternal God came to dwell in us (Romans 8:38-39).

**2) The identity we have gained through faith in Christ is an eternal identity.** We have become children of God (John 1:12, Romans 8:15-16), and heirs who will eternally enjoy God’s blessings (Romans 8:17). That is why when we pray, God answers our prayers (Matthew 7:9-11). When we, His children, suffer, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings (Romans 8:26). He sends His angels to help us (Hebrews 1:14). Now, the Father’s kingdom is our background (Philippians 3:20).

**3) There is authority that comes from this identity.** **This is the eternal authority given to us.** We are given authority to break the power of darkness (Luke 10:19) in the name of Christ. Even though Satan has been orchestrating various evils in the world since Adam’s fall, he cannot overcome us who are in Christ (1 John 4:4). Despite the temptations and persecutions of the times, if we persist in spiritual battles, then we will gain evidence as much as Satan has worked (Luke 22:31-32). With this authority, we save all nations and raise up disciples prepared by God (Matthew 28:18-20).

**2. Even the blessings we enjoy on this earth are all connected to eternity.**

**1) The worship and prayer we offer as saved believers are channels to enjoy eternal blessings.** It is said that when we worship and sing praises, angels worship and praise along with us (Revelation 7:9-12). It is also said that our prayers are collected in golden bowls and carried by angels to the eternal heavenly throne (Revelation 8:3-4). Do you feel like there is no immediate answer to your prayers? Wait with faith. You are storing up eternal responses and blessings.

**2) The suffering we endure for the gospel on this earth becomes a stepping stone for eternal glory.** The sacrifices, tears, and losses for the sake of the gospel will be rewarded a hundredfold, and we will enjoy eternal blessings (Mark 10:29-30).

**3) Every effort and devotion we offer before God is the foundation for preparing an eternal inheritance.** That is why He tells us not to store up treasures only on earth (Matthew 6:19-20). It becomes greater and more precious than any worldly investment. God will not be deceived. Whatever one sows, they will reap (Galatians 6:7-8). He emphasizes, "Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).

**3. Looking toward eternal answers and blessings, we must constantly challenge and evaluate ourselves on this earth.** Verse 7 contains Paul’s confession. To conclude our lives as Paul did at the end of his life, we must first evaluate the year.

**1) Paul said, “I have fought the good fight.” This refers to the lifelong spiritual battle (the reason for practicing the 7 bartizan prayers).**

**① Paul endured unspeakable suffering during his ministry (2 Corinthians 11:23-28, 2 Timothy 4:10-14).** Yet Paul never repaid evil for evil but overcame evil with good (Romans 12:17, 21). Ultimately, Paul did not fight against people but engaged in spiritual battles, and he confessed that he was victorious. He believed this would become an eternal crown of righteousness for himself and all believers (2 Timothy 4:8).

**② Satan is also a spiritual being.** That is why the eternal Son of God, Christ, came to crush Satan’s head (Genesis 3:15). For Satan, eternal punishment in the unquenchable fire of hell has been prepared (Matthew 25:41). On the day the Lord returns, these forces of darkness will kneel before us (Romans 16:20), and we will enjoy complete victory (Revelation 21:7).

**2) Paul said, “I have finished the race.” This describes the life of an evangelist (the reason for holding onto the 7 milestones).**

**① The prayers and dedication we offered this year to proclaim the gospel are significant. If seeds were sown, they will certainly be reaped (1 Corinthians 3:7-8).** Have you shared the gospel with anyone? Whether it is convenient or inconvenient, we are told to work at it (2 Timothy 4:2).

**② In the last days, people will not listen to sound doctrine but will gather teachers to suit their desires (2 Timothy 4:3).** They may mock you. It doesn’t matter. Do not be shaken, silently walk the path of an evangelist. These evangelists (disciples) will reign with Christ, eating and drinking with Him (Luke 22:30).

**3) Paul said, “I have kept the faith.” This is a deep enjoyment with God (the reason for holding onto the 7 journeys of the covenant).**

**① What does God truly desire from us? Faith in the gospel that He gives by grace.** While our good deeds and efforts are important, they must follow the enjoyment of the grace of the gospel. Why? Because those things alone cannot achieve God’s righteousness. Hence, the emphasis on faith alone (Romans 1:17).

**② When we believe, God’s power is revealed (Luke 8:48, 50).** The disciples enjoyed this blessing as they spread the gospel to the world, even conquering Rome (Mark 16:17-20).

**③ Ultimately, what Satan fears most is Christ alone, and when we restore our faith in Him.** Paul declared that he kept this faith. It will become increasingly challenging to keep this faith (the reason for movements promoting religious unification).

**Conclusion -** Our salvation, identity, authority, and the power and blessings we enjoy are eternal. From this, true spirituality arises. This eternal power and blessing are the secrets to saving ourselves, our families, our children, our church, and the world.