

The Challenge Faced by the Believers in the End Generation

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Foreword:

In Matthew Chapter 24, the disciples asked Jesus-“*what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?*” Jesus hereby interpreted clearly what will happen in the future, and he emphasized again-“*So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of man.*”

The day Lord comes just as the thief who comes at night. We are unable to know exactly when the Lord will come. However, according to Matthew Chapter 24 Jesus’ telling to the disciple about the sign of the closed end day, the Bible has instructed us the challenge which we will experience and face with before the coming of the Lord. There are three items as below:

1. The church will be persecuted. (Mt 24:15-22)

In Revelation 13:1-10, there will be some nation, which has good technology and powerful economy but doesn’t know God; become prosperous in the end generation. “*it opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.*” Therefore, Not only he isn’t reverent to God, he holds great authority and power. Further, he will persecute the church and believers.

“*and all who dwell on earth will worship it, every one whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain.*” In this kind of persecution and tribulation, the faith of the believers will be examined. “*If any one is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes, if any one slays with sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.*”

“*And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul*” (Mt 10:28)

“*And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.*” (Rev 12:11)

Daniel and his three friends had experienced the plight of being thrown in lion pit and being in fire kiln; however, God was with them.

Whether our faith can endure the test of fire? Will we submit to the evil authority? Can we build up the unbreakable relationship with God by our pain, frustration, and tribulation in our life? Is the faith of “But if not” (Da 3:18) reserved in our heart?

2. The bewildering of false Christs and false prophets (Mt 24:22-28)

“Then if any one says to you, ‘Lo, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Lo, I have told you beforehand. So if they say to you, ‘Lo, he is in the wilderness,’ do not go out; if they say ‘Lo, he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it.”

Korea is the most country in which many state “I, the Christ”. Currently a new denomination “East Lighting” is one of them.

Revelation 13:11-15 depicts the appearance of false Christ and false prophets. *“Then I saw another beast which rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.”* This version which indicates the shape like a lamb means it resembled Christ, but the content of his paradoxical speaking is the intrigue of devil.

“It exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. It works great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of men; and by the signs which it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast, it deceives those who dwell on earth, bidding them make an image for the beast which was wounded by the sword and yet lived; and it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast should even speak, and to cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.” In the end generation, there are persecution from politic and confusion from religion.

Bible says *“Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”* (Mt 7:13-14) Lord said He is the door of the sheep (Jn 10:1-10), the way, truth and life. And *“unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”* We shall enter

the kingdom of heaven by the path of “believing in Jesus” and “Born of water and Spirit”. This way is clear but strict. (Jn 3:5-8) People won’t be saved by only “believing in heart and admit on the mouth. (Ro 19:9-10; Jn 9:18-23)

The action of faith should have important movement. *“He who believed and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned”*. (Mk 16:16) After cleansing the sin by baptism, we can belong to the Lord to have renewal life and establish the new relationship with God (Gal 3:26-29) to receive the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit can help us live a new living day by day and have an abundant life. *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”* (Jn 10:10) The foundation of the faith shall be founded basically on Christ. By exercising and obeying the word of God and His teaching, we may not be easily bewildered. (Mt 7:15-27; 23:13-15)

3. Focus on the world and pursue the happiness of eating and drinking (Mt 24:32-41)

“As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was in the days of Lots—they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built, but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom fire and brimstone rained from heaven and destroyed them all—So will it be on the day when the Son of man is revealed. On that day, let him who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away; and likewise let him who is in the field not turn back. Remember Lot’s wife.”(Lk 17:26-32)

Lot’s wife was turned her head back because of her greedy desire for her past life— Wealth and rank, and having the enjoyment of eating and drinking. The great harlot in Revelation Chapter 17 and 18 means “this world”.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passed away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides for ever.” (1 Jn 2:15-17)

This world deceives people by every kind of lust to draw their greedy heart. It disordered their esteem by fame and proud to cast their life and pursue the wealth. (2

Ti 1:24)

But the Bible says: *“for ‘All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord abides for ever.”* (1 Pe 1:24)

Is that the true wisdom to eagerly earn the wealth for the descendants?

The wise king Solomon said *“I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless. So my heart began to despair over all my toilsome labor under the sun”*. (Ecc2:18-20)

We shall remember what Paul has reminded us in the end generation in which people pursues the wealth and lust that *“For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.”* (1Ti 6:7-9)

Synthetically looking at the three challenges in the end day which Lord told us, are we ready? (Mt 24:42-44)