

What God Has Entrusted to His Church, 3 of 3

by Stephen Kaung

The church is the body of Christ, a lampstand that contains and uplifts the light of Christ, and it is entrusted with the testimony of Jesus.

Duration: 1:27:07

Scripture: Revelation 3:12

Topics: "Church"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of experiencing the grace of God and recognizing our weakness. He encourages the audience to look to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith. The speaker also discusses the significance of the church as the vessel entrusted with the testimony of Jesus. He highlights the diversity of local churches and the need for fellowship to share the fullness of Christ. The sermon concludes with the reminder that the Lord is looking for himself in the church.

Transcript

Will you please turn to 2 Timothy? Chapter 1, we'll read from verse 8 through verse 14. I hope that these words have been impressed deeply upon our hearts. I hope that these words have been impressed deeply upon our hearts.

Chapter 8 With a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time, but has been made manifest now by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has annulled death and brought to light life and incorruptibility by the Galatians, to which I have been appointed a heret, an apostle, and teacher of the nations, for which cause also I suffer these things. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep for that day the deposit I have entrusted to Him. Have an outline of sound words, which words thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Keep, by the Holy Spirit which dwells in us, the good deposit entrusted. Do not be ashamed of the testimony you have given to our Lord, nor be ashamed of what I have asked of my Lord. But according to the power of the Lord, you shall suffer with me for the sake of my salvation.

The Lord has saved us, and has called upon us with a holy calling. Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time. But now, through the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, it has been shown.

He has abolished death, and through the voice of the Lord has revealed the life which cannot be destroyed. I have been appointed a heret, an apostle, and teacher of the nations, for which cause also I suffer these things. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep for that day the deposit I have entrusted to Him.

From what I have heard, the scale of the testimony you have given to my Lord, you shall use the confidence and love you have in Christ Jesus to keep it for a long time. The good deposit entrusted to you in the past, you shall rely on the Holy Spirit which dwells in us to keep it for a long time. Will you please turn to the book of Acts? Chapter 2, verse 42.

Acts chapter 2, verse 42. And they persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers. And they persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers.

And finally, the book of Revelation. Chapter 3, verse 3. We read from verse 12 and verse 13. He that overcomes, Him will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and He shall go no more at all out.

And I will write upon Him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God and my new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He that overcomes, Him will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and He shall go no more at all out.

And I will write upon Him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God, and my new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. May we have a word of prayer.

Dear Lord, as we gather together this morning, our hearts are full of gratitude. Thou art so good and gracious to us. It is Thou who has begun this conference, and we do believe that Thou art the One to end this conference.

We do pray that during this last session of ministry, whatever is yet unfinished will be finished by Thy Spirit. We pray that Thy Spirit will guide Thy word to each and every one of us according to Thy wisdom. That Thy will may be accomplished to all of us, and we desire to give Thee all the glory.

We ask in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen. Dear brothers and sisters, we are really thankful to our God, because we believe He has begun this conference, and we also believe that He will end this conference.

I feel deeply in my heart that it pleases Him to end this conference with the Lord's Table, because the Lord's Table really acts out all that we have fellowship with. We have fellowship on the theme of what God has entrusted the Church, and this is all being represented by the Table. Here we find that our Lord Jesus, He shed His blood for us.

Here we see how He gave His body. In other words, we find that how He gave Himself His all to His Church. He has not withheld anything from us.

He poured out Himself completely to us, that we may have fellowship with Him, that we may have life, and life abundant, and it is only on the basis of that life of Christ that we may be able to bear that witness. We are here to exhibit the death of our Lord. We are here to present, not only to the seen world, but even to the unseen world, what Christ means to us.

And we are here to declare the victory of Christ. And we are here to wait for His return. When His glory shall fill the earth as water fills the sea.

When His glory shall fill the earth as water fills the sea. This is our testimony. This is where the power of bearing the testimony comes from.

It is not by ourselves. It is by Him who gave Himself to us. So I do feel that this is the right way to end and also to begin the days ahead.

We have fellowship on this matter of what God has entrusted the Church. This is not a small thing. This is not something that we can neglect.

This is something that every redeemed of the Lord must know. Not only know, but also to enter in. What God has entrusted to the Church is none other but the testimony of Jesus.

He wants us to see Christ as He sees Him. Christ is the first and the last. In other words, He is everything.

This is not a theory. This is a truth. This is an experience.

It is the will of God that we who are saved that we will see Jesus as the first and the last of our life. This is our testimony to the world. And we are here to testify that He is the Living One because He lives in us.

His life is an overcoming life. His life is a life of love. Brothers and sisters, this is the testimony that we all bear.

Thank God that our Lord Jesus, for our sakes, died. He went into death in order to rob death of its power because He is the resurrection and the life. And He wants us to know the power of His resurrection in our daily walk that we may exhibit the power of His resurrection.

And He lives forevermore. He lives in us. To show forth His everlasting life.

He holds in His hand the keys of death and of Hades. To us believers, we may go to sleep but we never die because God has already in Christ taken away the power of death. The Lord Jesus said, I will build my church.

And the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And this is the testimony of the church. This is what God has entrusted to us.

Isn't it amazing that God should entrust us with His beloved Son? He has entrusted to us the glad tidings. And our brother has already explained to us what that glad tidings is. It is a tidings of life overcoming death.

It tells us of our Lord Jesus that He is the Living One and lives forevermore. And because He lives, we also live. And then we find that what God has entrusted to us can be also called the faith.

All the counsel of God recorded in the Word are entrusted to us. We are not supposed to know only the beginning of the Gospel. We need to know the wisdom of God in a mystery.

What He has purposed for us in Christ Jesus even before the foundation of the world. And this is the trust that God has entrusted the church. And then we have also fellowship on this matter of the church.

Oftentimes we find that we are very individualistic. It is true that we are individuals. And it is not God's will that we should imitate other people.

God wants us only to imitate Christ. God loves variety. Everyone is different.

But brothers and sisters, in spite of all our differences, He unites us one in Christ Jesus. Our Lord Jesus is the fullness of the Godhead. Whatever you can think of God, how can we comprehend the riches of God? We cannot understand His love, His holiness, His righteousness, His glory, His almightiness, and His wisdom.

We cannot fathom it. And yet our Lord Jesus is the fullness of the Godhead. And this fullness is to fill the body.

No one person can contain all the riches of Christ. No one person can manifest the glory of Christ. It needs a body, a group of people.

We say it is a new creation, a new mankind. And those who are redeemed of the Lord, they become members of the body of Christ. And then to that body, the testimony of Jesus is entrusted.

So dear brothers and sisters, we have already fellowship on the importance of the vision of seeing what the Church is. Because this is the will of God. This is the only vessel that can contain the treasure.

Not only to contain the treasure, but also to manifest the glory of Christ. To express the light of that treasure. The Church is a lampstand.

It is made of gold. You know, when you read the Old Testament, when God commanded Moses to build the tabernacle, in that tabernacle, there are only two pieces of furniture that are of pure gold. Nothing but gold.

One is the mercy seat in the holiest of all. And we know that our Lord Jesus is the mercy seat. And then there is another piece of furniture that is of gold.

And it is the lampstand. We will think that the Church is composed of all of us. And so far as we are concerned, we are wood.

And yet we find that in that lampstand, there is only gold. Now, what is the Church? We say the Church is the gathering together of the saved ones. Probably we think that that is the right definition.

But you find that when all the saved ones are gathered together, we think it is paradise. But we find it is like hell. Because even though we are saved, we have Christ in us.

But our own nature, our own self are so strong. Oftentimes we think that our brother or our sister is rather strong. Not knowing that we are just as strong.

And how when we are together, we clash with one another. So that is the reason why we become churchgoers. On Sunday morning, for an hour, we meet together.

And we have some people entertaining us. And after that hour, we departed. The less contact we have, the better we are.

We are not one body. We are not sticking to one another. We are afraid of being too close to one another.

It is because even though we are saved, even though we have the life of Christ in us, but our Adamic life, our own life, our self are strong. There are more woods than gold. And these woods are corrupted woods.

That's what we find out. So to say the church is the gathering of the called out ones. Now it is true that the word Ecclesia means called out ones gathered together.

But do not forget, when two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. In other words, when the two or three are gathered together, that is not a church. Two or three can gather together as a social thing.

But they have to gather together in the name of the Lord Jesus. In the name of the Lord Jesus means under his headship. When we gather together and hold fast the head, then you find the reality of the church.

Dear brothers and sisters, what is the church? Now once I was sharing with Brother Sparks. And I know that our dear brother is very fearful of anything that sounds like formula. Because he believes that spiritual has no formula.

But on that day I thought in order to help the brothers and sisters, I have to use a formula. So I ask his forgiveness first. And then I suggest this question.

I say, what is the church? Suppose in this world we have only three Christians. Peter, James and John. And you do not have better Christians than these three.

Now what is the church? Is it Peter plus John plus James equals the church? Now if that is the case, then you find Peter is one who wants to be the first. He always leads. And then one day the two sons of Zebedee outmaneuver him.

When our Lord was going to Jerusalem, they came with their mother. And their mother is our Lord's earthly aunt. And then they come and ask the Lord something.

Promise that you will give whatever we ask you. I think they are ashamed of what they are going to ask. Here is a check.

You just sign it. And our Lord was very wise. He said, what do you want? Ah, then their mother said, In your kingdom let my two sons, one sit on your right and one sit on your left.

They got it all. No wonder the other disciples get indignant. Now that is the church.

You find power struggle in the church. That is something that should never happen. No, this is not a church.

So what is the church? The church is the Christ in Peter, plus the Christ in John, plus the Christ in James, equals to Christ, to church. Now you may have the definition. But then you find that in the church there are not only Christ, but also Peter and John and James.

Now as long as they are the elements of the church, there will be trouble. So what is the church? The church is the Christ in Peter minus Peter. Plus the Christ in John minus John.

Plus the Christ in James minus James. Equal to the church. Now what does it mean? It means that it is all gold.

There is not any wood in it. That is what the church is. But what is the church for? The church is not for itself.

It is a lampstand. The church is to contain and to uplift the light. The church is to contain and to uplift the light.

Our Lord Jesus himself is the light. And the church is the uplift, lifting up of the light. The church does not speak of itself.

The church speaks of Christ. And brothers and sisters, the testimony of Jesus is entrusted to the church. No individual can bear the testimony.

We need the whole body to uplift the head. Now this morning we would like to conclude it with another thing. And that is trustworthiness.

The trust is Christ, the testimony of Jesus. The trustee is the church, the body of Christ. Now the question is, is the church trustworthy? Now the question is, is the church trustworthy? Thank God Christ has committed himself totally to the church.

It is as if he is willing to rise or down together with the church. It is as if he is willing to rise or down together with the church. He commits his own destiny to the church.

Whether the church will uplift him, or will put him down, this is a matter of trustworthiness. Now we have already mentioned before that our Lord Jesus came into this world not only to save the lost, but to call with a holy calling. And this call is calling to the eternal purpose of God.

This call is calling us to be his body. This is the call of discipleship. The call of discipleship is none other but to be like him.

That we may be transformed and conformed to his image. That we may be gold instead of just wood. Brothers and sisters, this is our calling.

We find that when he was in the world, he began to call his disciples. But we also find, even among his disciples, whenever our Lord Jesus was trying to lift them out of earth into heaven, whenever our Lord Jesus tried to tell them of something spiritual rather than natural, even his disciples could not understand him. Not only that, they thought this was too hard.

This was too much for them. And many of the disciples departed from him. They did not walk with him anymore.

Brothers and sisters, this was not only true when our Lord was on earth. This is true even today. And our Lord Jesus turned to his twelve.

The Lord said, Do you also want to go? The Lord gave them the liberty to leave. And you remember how Peter said, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the word of eternal life. And we know that you are the Son of God.

In other words, here was a person and he was representing the others. He was caught by the vision of the Lord. And once caught, no escape.

Even though he did not understand, yet he trusted. Dear brothers and sisters, thank God he has called us to be his disciples. Thank God, in spite of us, in spite of all our weaknesses, if we really see that he is the Son of God, that he has the word of life, even if he pushes us out, we will stay put with him.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is something so important to us today. It is not because there are some people who are perfect or strong. We are all weak.

But praise God, if once we have a vision of Christ, once if we see who he is, he is not only our Savior, but he is our Lord. He has caught us and we have no escape. Other people may have somewhere to go.

But to whom shall we go? We are stuck with him. Dear brothers and sisters, this is what is necessary unless the Lord has caught you. Even though you are weak, even though you are imperfect, because Peter showed his weakness again and again afterwards.

He even denied the Lord three times. Can it be weaker than that? But that is not the problem. The problem is, are you caught by the Lord? Dear brothers and sisters, may the Lord really arrest each one of us.

He has saved us. He has caught us. He has caught us.

And there is no escape in our lives. We may fail, but he will raise us up. And to such people he committed himself.

On the day of Pentecost, when the hundred and twenty were gathered together in that upper room and prayed, these are the people caught by Christ. As we say, in the ascension of our Lord Jesus, at one time five, five hundred burglars saw him. But only a hundred and twenty obeyed him and stayed in Jerusalem.

They waited for his promised Spirit. They prayed with one accord, and on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came. And in one spirit they were baptized into one body.

And to that body Christ, the head, committed himself. O brothers and sisters, when you read the book of Acts, when you read the book of Acts, when the early church began, from a hundred and twenty believers it becomes three thousand hundred and twenty. But all these members of the body they persevered, continued on together in the fellowship and teaching of the apostles and the fellowship of the apostles in the breaking of bread and prayers.

Brothers and sisters, not only the hundred and twenty but also the three thousand and then four thousand and out. You find that the body began to grow and in this body we find the richest of the head dwell. And through that body the testimony of Jesus was done.

It is very strange. Now today we call ourselves Christians but the name Christian at that time was not Christian. It was not there.

It was until Acts 11 in the church in Antioch then you find the name Christian. But even without a specific name strangely you find that all those who believe in the Lord Jesus all those Jews Gentiles they seem to live a life all together the same. The Jews have their Jewish way of life.

And the Gentiles have their Gentile way of life. Just like the Americans have the American way of life. But the Chinese have the Chinese way of life.

But here you find a people that was composed of Jews and Gentiles but they live a different way of life. Different manner of life. It was something taught.

It seemed to be so super naturally natural. How they live together. How they love one another.

How they rise above their selfishness. They are willing to share with one another. How they fellowship with one another.

How they keep together the teaching of Christ. They express their unity in the breaking of bread. Because there is only one loaf and they fellowship with one another.

They live for Christ. Christ live in them. So when the world look at them they say now who are these people? So in the beginning of the book of Acts you find they call these people the people of the way.

Now in the Chinese unfortunately it is translated a little different. Because the word Dao it can be translated as teaching or truth or as the way of life. But in the book of Acts here they are people of the way refers to their walk.

In other words Christ is the way. And they walk following the lamb. Brothers and sisters you find that the early church has a glorious testimony.

Now it is true that in the early church they have problems. The problems to them are opportunity It is not really problems. Because when a problem is solved in the right way it is blessing.

Now you find that within thirty some years when you come to the end of the book of Acts you find Paul for the sake of the testimony of Jesus he was in prison in Rome. But he was able to live in his hired house. And how he received people and how he preached to them concerning Christ.

And of the kingdom. And he did it unhinderedly. Now that is the history of the early church.

It shows us that our Lord was right. He committed himself to his body. And this body was trustworthy.

But unfortunately after another thirty some years when you come to the end of the first century and that is where you find in the book of Revelation John for the sake of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus was exiled in an island of Patmos. And there he saw a vision. He saw seven golden lambs dance.

With one like a son of God standing in the midst of them. Now our brother has already explained to us. These seven golden lambs dance represents the church of all ages.

You can look at it chronologically. You can look at contemporary. That is at any time you will find these different situations.

And there you'll find our Lord Jesus. He was there. Now what was he doing there? Now we said there he was the royal high priest.

And he was ministering in the true tabernacle. Now what was he looking for? And strangely you'll find one thing. At the beginning of each letter you'll find he says something about himself.

Because in chapter one you'll find tenfold description of the Son of Man. And then in each letter you'll find he will give something of what he is. To the church.

Because it was it were seven churches. Seven local churches. So you'll find that even the revelation of himself is partial.

No one local church contains all the revelation of Christ. All the local churches together join together to share the fullness of Christ. And each local church has a specific commitment.

Every local church is different. The difference is because Christ has committed himself in a specific way. That's why we need fellowship.

We need to share with one another so that we can have the whole testimony. So what is the Lord looking for in the church? He's looking for his own testimony. Himself.

It is as if he said I have committed myself to you. Can I find myself in you? You may have many good things. But if I cannot find myself in you you have failed your responsibility.

Dear brothers and sisters when you read the seven churches aside from the church in Philadelphia because the church in Philadelphia is what the Lord really desires to have. But when you read the other churches aside from Smyrna no blame. But all the other churches the Lord calls to be paid.

Why? The repentance is not because of committed certain sin. It's true. They have committed.

But the repentance is to return to Christ. Now brothers and sisters you will say the church has failed. God is wrong.

How can he commit his beloved son to the church? But brothers and sisters men may fail but God never fails. Therefore you find the last message to the church is repentance. The message is he who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

He that overcomes In other words God is calling for overcomers in the church. Now who are these overcomers? The overcomers are not super Christians. The overcomers are not the perfect ones.

No. These overcomers as we say they are the normal Christians. Now what is the normalcy of a Christian? Christ has given himself to him.

And he lives according to Christ. Brothers and sisters when the church seems to fail in general they fail in the testimony of Jesus. Then you find the Lord calls overcomers out in the church to stand for his testimony.

The call to overcomers is personal. But the effect of the overcomers is corporal. They are the first fruits.

And the first fruits always guarantee the harvest. The overcomers do not overcome for themselves. The overcomers overcome for the church.

The call is personal. But the work is corporate. Brothers and sisters and by calling the overcomers returning to the first.

This is the way that God proves that he is right. This is the way that God will accomplish his purpose. Now the question is who can overcome? What is the secret of the overcomers? Or you can broaden it and say

how can the church be trustworthy? Now you remember in 2 Timothy 1 in verse 9 said, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time.

It is clear to us here that in order to be trustworthy it is not according to our works. Just as when we are saved we are become righteous not according to our works. It is by the grace of God.

So likewise brothers and sisters in order to be trustworthy it is not by our works. It is by the grace which God has given to us in Christ Jesus. Brothers and sisters the question is do we depend on ourselves or do we trust in his grace? Whenever God has a purpose at the same time he provides grace accordingly.

So when we are called with such a purpose to be the bearer of the testimony of Jesus how can we fulfill it? Not by our efforts it is only by the grace of God. The grace is there. Whenever there is a purpose there is grace.

Whenever there is a call there is a grace. So those who become trustworthy are those who depend on the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Now what is grace? Grace is something freely given.

Grace is the gift of God. You do not work for it. It is not because you are worthy.

It is because you look to his grace. Brothers and sisters if we depend on ourselves we will fail. But if we confess that we are weak but he is strong and we look to his grace you will find his grace is sufficient for our needs.

Now our brothers have told us now how can we keep the deposit? We have the outline of the word. We have heard it. Now how are we going to keep it? We keep it in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

The faith here is not my faith. It is his faith. You remember Galatians 2 verse 20.

I am crucified with Christ. No longer live I. It is Christ who lives in me. And now I live in the flesh.

How? By the faith of the Son of God who loves me and gave himself for me. We do not have faith. Jesus he is the author and the finisher of faith.

We look to him and he gives us faith. We look to him and he completes that faith. And the same thing with love.

Not like Peter. Lord I love you. I am willing to die with you.

But brothers and sisters that love does not work. It is not the love of God. So when our Lord said Simon son of Jonah do you love me? He dared not say it.

I have good feeling about you. But he dared not say I love you. Because he realized the love is in Christ Jesus.

And this is grace. Whether it is faith or whether it is love this is grace. It is open to all of us.

And then you find in verse 14 keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us the good deposit and trust it. Not by our flesh. It is by the Holy Spirit.

And this is the spirit of grace. So brothers and sisters the only way to be trustworthy you will find that it is not in ourselves. We cannot depend on ourselves.

We confess we are weak. We need him. We look to him and his grace is sufficient.

There is a story. A servant of God Mr. Web Pamel he loved the Lord. And once he has his child with him and went to the seashore for rest.

Unfortunately the child died. So he buried the child. He went home and it was Saturday and usually on Saturday he would prepare his message that he would speak to the people.

So in his study he was searching trying to say something. He was such a good man. He wanted to comfort the congregation.

And no matter how he searched he couldn't find a text. Because he was sorrowful even unto death. How could he comfort his people if he himself is un comforted? And as he was struggling it happened that he looked up and he saw something above the fireplace.

It was a scripture verse. And the word is my grace is so great it is sufficient for you. He said, Lord your grace is not sufficient.

I'm sorrowful. I'm not comforted. He struggled over this matter.

And then he saw in that text the word my grace is sufficient for you. The is is in different colour. And that reveals something to him.

He was praying that the grace of God may be sufficient to him. Will be sufficient for him. But now the Lord said it is sufficient.

Faith was given to him. He believed in the word of God and he was comforted. And the next morning when he went to deliver his sermon he just tell the people what happened to him.

And the floor was filled with tears. Brothers and sisters do you experience the grace of God? It is hard to boast of our weakness but his power is perfected in our weakness. We want to be strong we think only if we are strong that we will glorify God.

We can fulfill our responsibility. We can bear the testimony of Jesus. But on the contrary the truth is when we confess that we are nothing we cannot we do not even try but we look up to him the author and finisher of faith.

So dear brothers and sisters what is it that God has entrusted? It is the testimony of Jesus. What is the vessel the trustee of that trust? It is the church the Christ who make us trustworthy. It is Christ himself.

From the beginning to the end it is Christ. Because this is the will of God. One day all things will be summed up in Christ.

Wherever you look you see Christ. And this must begin with us. Let us pray.

Dear Lord we do worship thee. Thou has not only saved us thou has called us with a holy calling. Not according to our works but according to thy own purpose and grace in Christ Jesus.

Dear Lord we are touched by thy love. We want to surrender ourselves completely to thee. We want to thank thee for the trust that thou has given to us.

And we want to thank thee that thou who has committed is the one who will keep it to that day. Like thy servant Paul we know whom we have believed. We know whom we have trusted.

And we are fully persuaded that you are able to keep the deposit which we have entrusted to you. Until that day praise be unto God. In the name of our Lord Jesus.

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