

The Locked Room

Written by Ir. David Kurniadi
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There was a sad and unexpected situation after the resurrection of Jesus. The disciples gathered together in one room with the door tightly locked because they were full of fear of the Jews (John 20:19). This fear was related to their unbelief to what Jesus had said, that he would raise again from the dead after his crucifixion (Mark 16:11,13,14). So, there is close relation between fear and unbelief.

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews leaders ...” (John 20:19).

Fear made believers locked the room and did nothing but trembling. Or, if there were some busy moves, they were just busy moving inside the locked room. As the result there are a lot of friction inside: critics, quarrels, blaming each other, boasting and envy. And the locked room closes God’s possibilities. There is no hope for the future in the locked room, especially if it is filled with full of fear people. This is the situation of most of believers or the churches today. And this is happened because they are actually unbelieving believers. What an ironic situation?

“When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it” (Mark 16:11).

“These returned and reported to the rest; but they did not believe them either” (Mark 16:13).

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“He rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen” (Mark 16:14).

Unfortunately the churches do not recognize their fear and unbelief. They never admit it. They do not realize that they are enslaved by fear and unbelief that make them paralyze and cannot do what the Lord wants them to do. They know and understand God’s command, they believe it and say “amen!” to it, but they don’t do anything, they do not obey it, because they fear. They are fear that they would be failed, or rejected, or criticized, or offend others. They fear about so many things that occupy their mind. They are full of human’s presumptions and reasons.

“The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption into sonship. And by him we cry: Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15)

This fear is not come from the Lord. It’s a spirit of slavery that makes them timid (Romans 8:15). But they never take it seriously. They consider it as normal. They do not believe in God’s possibility and God’s ability (Jeremiah 32:26). They just look at their own inability and infirmity. Just because they have experienced failures in the past, they think that it is forever impossible for them.

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“Everything is possible for one who believes!” (Mark 9:23)

“I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?” (Jeremiah 32:27)

There is a story about an elephant that was bound with a big and thick rope at one of his foot onto a pole since it was very young. Year by year the young elephant tried to break off the rope without success. So the elephant thought that he would never be able to break the rope. The elephant do not realize that he grows and becomes a big and strong elephant now, and he has enough strength to break the rope if he would. But he never does it because he is afraid he will fail again.

“(Then) Jesus came and stood among them and said: Peace be with you!” (John 20:19).

But the good news is, Jesus knows this situation and he wants to change it. So Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst of the disciples and said to them: Peace to you!

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“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:27).

The only antidote for fear is the peace that Jesus gives. He is the Prince of peace, and he is willing to give his own peace (John 14:27): the peace that beyond human understanding (Philippians 4:7). Only the encounter with Jesus can drive out our fear. The Lord Jesus always says: Fear not! Peace be with you! because he knows we need it to overcome our fear. So when fear takes dominion over us, seek for Jesus and get his peace to fill and guard our heart and mind.

We must not live in fear, because fearful feeling is very uncomfortable. It hurts us and harms us. It's addicted and a kind of slavery of the intimidation spirit. We must deal with it as soon as possible. Let Jesus drives away our fear by filling our mind and heart with his peace. We must uproot all the fear that caused by unbelief within us that we can live in peace and calm spirit.

Then after that Jesus showed them his pierced hands and his side, and the disciples were filled with joy (John 20:20).

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When we can overcome our fear and we have a peaceful heart and mind, then the Lord will add our faith with “hard evidence.” This is to remove all the theories and presumptions in our minds that come from human logic and understanding. This is to break off our unbelief and doubts. God cannot work with a doubtful person (James 1:6-8). Doubt and unbelief abort our faith and kill our hope and our joy. Even Jesus cannot do many miracles in the midst of doubts and unbelief (Matthew 13:58).

When doubt and unbelief can leave us then we will be filled with exceeding joy. Joy is the sign of faith and hope. Joy turns on our spirit and makes it burning. Then we could become God’s witness for the lost world. Joy and peace attract the restless world, because they desperately need it and seek for it.

And then God’s assignment will come: As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you! (John 20:21). The purpose of Jesus came to them after his resurrection was to send his disciples to spread the good news about Him, not just to gather in the locked room and only discussing about his life and his resurrection among themselves. Jesus wants the world to know him and come to him and believe in him as their Savior so the world may receive their salvation. This is the very purpose of his coming.

We have a unique God. He is Jesus. There is no one like Him. He is the only God who has a Father (John 2:16) and calls Himself a Son of God (John 10:36) with the risk that the religious leader will kill him because his claim was considered as great blasphemy toward Jehovah (John 10:33; 19:7).

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He is the only God who was willing to incarnate as human being: the Creator became a creation (John 1:14); the unlimited God became limited man. He didn't spare His equality with God as the thing to be retained, but has emptied himself to descend into the world and became human being (Philippians 2:6-7).

“Who, although being essentially one with God and in the form of God (possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God as God), did not think this equality with God was a thing to eagerly grasped or retained. But stripped himself (of all privileges and rightful dignity), so as to assume the guise of a servant (slave), in that he became like man and was born a human being” (Philippians 2:6-7).

He is the only God who was willing to lay down his life (Matthew 20:28) at the cross to die as man's substitute; the Immortal became mortal and tasted death (Hebrews 2:9).

He is the only God who was willing to be made sin though he knew no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21); the Holy One became sinful. He is the only God who was willing to go down into Hades (Ephesians 4:9) to pay the penalty of sin (Hebrews 2:9) as our substitute; the Owner of Heaven went into Hell.

He is the only God who rose from the dead and overcame death and live forever (Revelations

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1:18). He is the only God who ascended to Heaven in front of many witnesses and with naked eyes they saw him covered by the cloud went back to His throne (Luke 24:50-51).

“After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight” (Acts 1:9).

And he wants his disciples to become his witness, his living proof, of all what he has done (Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 2:9).

This uniqueness of our God makes us - the believers - unique people. We are the children of God, the chosen people, the citizen of Heaven, the ambassador of Christ in the world. So Jesus sends us to tell the whole world about Him (Matthew 28:18-20), about the salvation in His name: that man may have forgiveness of their sins by faith in Him (Acts 2:38). We are to spread the Good News that there is hope for the future in Christ: that man can have a second chance in their life by being a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). What a wonderful assignment we have received?

But Jesus does not send us with an empty hand (Luke 10:19). He has equipped and empowered us with the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He breathed the disciples and said: Receive the Holy Spirit! (John 20:22)

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He breathed the life giving Spirit into our spirit: the same powerful Spirit that has raised Jesus from the dead (Romans 8:11; Ephesians 1:19-20). And the anointing of the Holy Spirit is now within the believers (1 Corinthians 6:19), and ready for action! He will move when the believers move to fulfill God's will.

“And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord (through His Holy Spirit) kept working with them and confirming the message by the attesting signs and miracles that closely accompanied it” (Mark 16:20).

But ironically many of the believers tarry and waiting for the action of the Holy Spirit while the Holy Spirit is waiting for them to take their step. He anticipates the action of the believers but the believers keep waiting and do nothing. Then it becomes a “status quo.” It is the Devil trap! We must release ourselves from this trap and get out of the satanic circle that makes the church go round and round and not go straightly forward.

If the donkey stumbles at the same rock it means it goes round in the circle path. It is the same with the church, if the church faces the same problem from time to time; it means the church does not move straight – fulfilling the Great Commission – but moves in the circle dealing endlessly with their internal affairs.

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The early church encountered the same problem (Acts 6:1). There began to appear complaints among the church members about the church service for the needy. There is a lesson here: that when the church stopped their step in preaching the Gospel and stopped only until Jerusalem, while God's purpose the Gospel must be spread also in Judea, Samaria even to the utmost part of the earth (Acts 1:8), then they began to face many internal problems: "the friction inside the locked room."

God actually was telling them not to forget their original task. But then the church, instead of sending evangelist, they formed the board of elders (Acts 6:3-6). This was not wrong, because it has made the local church in Jerusalem grew rapidly (Acts 6:7). But still the original purpose of God had not been done, as it should be. And God was not happy, because He wanted that the Gospel to reach the whole world.

But the church could not listen to what was God telling them through the problems that arisen. Then God began to speak to them in another way: the persecution of the church (Acts 8:1). Then we see that the church began to move to Judea and Samaria according to the Lord's command (Acts 1:8).

"On that day great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria" (Acts 8:1).

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Eventually the Gospel reached Rome, “the utmost part of the world.” And from there the Gospel spread throughout the world, because the Roman Empire was occupying most of civilized world during that time. And today the Gospel has reached our place.

Fear and hesitation that come from unbelief cause the church to substitute the Great Commission with unproductive things in the church or with things that do not give any benefit to the Kingdom of God. They think that Great Commission is an option. Great Commission is not an option or alternative but it is a direct command from Jesus, our General and our King (Matthew 28:18-20).

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

Many believers embrace the mindset of the Old Testament time regarding the work of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament time, the Holy Spirit came and depart upon some body whose God wanted to use. So they had to wait until the Spirit came upon them and they started to act. They had to wait for the sign that the Holy Spirit was upon them and then they would become mighty and did a mighty work (1 Samuel 10:7). That was why the Holy Spirit can withdraw from Saul, or from Samson.

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“Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you” (1 Samuel 10:7).

But in the New Testament time the Holy Spirit dwells permanently within the believers (John 14:16-17); as long as they believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We do not have to wait for somebody who is already with us, don't we?. Instead the Holy Spirit is waiting for us to act and become a witness for Christ: to tell the world about the wonderful work of Christ that has changed our life beautifully (1 Peter 2:9).

“But you are chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

We are the living proof of the work of Christ and the world actually waiting for Good News because every time they only hear a bad news. We are the only channels for God to bring the Good News to the world (Romans 10:14-15).

Jesus has received all the power and authority both in Heaven and on earth. And he can give us that power so that we can go unto the world to preach the Good News about salvation. Whoever believes in our message and give their self to be baptized will be saved!

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With this power we have power over the enemy that nothing will harm us (Luke 10:19). We can lay our hand upon the sick people and they will be healed, and rebuke the evil spirits and they will obey us, so we can cast out demons from those who are possessed by them (Mark 16:17-18).

What a tremendous power we have received from the resurrected Christ? Now we fear no more; we doubt no more; we are not the unbelieving believers anymore; we are full of confident in Christ; we can open the locked door now and step outside the room and experience all the unlimited possibilities of God. We will not live in impossibility anymore but in the possibility of God. Hallelujah! Blessed be the name of the Lord!