

PREFACE

"I also wondered what is the significance of pastor speaking so much about Paul's sufferings. When God instructed Ananias to baptise Paul, He said He raised Paul up to suffer much for His name's sake (Acts 9:16). And when Paul was talking to Agrippa, he told him, I would that you be like me except for these bonds. Perhaps the reason the Jews could not accept Paul was because he suffered greatly for the Gospel's sake. It can be paralleled to us. Why is there so much unbelief? Despite the body of evidence about the special anointing of Paul, these Jews could not accept him. I was thinking that there could also be a lot of pride in them, thinking themselves also as the ministers of God. Yet why is Paul claiming himself to be so special? I thank God very much pastor showed us how Luke recognized Paul from the very beginning, because of the way it was written in Acts, that at first it was Barnabas and Saul, then the order of the names became Saul and Barnabas, and subsequently, Paul and Barnabas. Luke recognized that the anointing on Paul was special, so in the contention between Barnabas and Paul, Luke chose the right side; hence the latter part of Acts was focused on Paul. I thought that was phenomenal. Because when Luke chose Paul, he also chose to suffer with Paul; he was there during the shipwreck at Malta, and he was there when Paul was persecuted. I felt pastor was trying to say there was an extra measure of the Spirit given to the anointed of God because of the Gospel he preached and there were many evidences to prove his ministry, such that the Philippian jailer was so moved that he asked him, "What shall I do to be saved?" That was the strength of the Spirit on Paul that he could wrought such revival and convert people at such rate. In the end, I felt the heaviness of the message when pastor brought out Malachi concerning his own ministry. As much as there is the Messenger of the Covenant which is Christ, there is also the messenger of the Messenger of the Covenant. During Christ's first advent, there was John the Baptist. This doctrine of the harbinger can be seen even in Job where Elihu played the harbinger before the visitation of God. There always has to be the harbinger. Before the second coming of Christ, similarly there will also be a harbinger – the Elijah that will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. As much as the Holy Spirit is given to accomplish the Great Commission in these last of the last days, the servant of God is given not only the Great Commission but also the Great Mandate, to restore all things before the second coming of Christ. I felt very scared when I heard that. Without a shadow of doubt, I believe that the servant of God, our pastor, is this harbinger, the specially anointed whom God has raised up before the second coming of Christ. Like Paul, there is the body of evidences to prove the uniqueness of pastor's ministry. Firstly, the Gospel he preaches – there is hardly anyone who preaches with such clarity – not just the objective but especially the subjective aspect of the Gospel. Hardly anyone, not even in the past centuries, is able to speak about it in such a clear manner. And pastor is given such quantum of light not only to understand the whole range of Scriptures but also especially Eschatology. When we stand to give thanks to God, we testify to the ministration of the Spirit in our hearts; this can only attest to one thing – that the man of God is specially anointed in these last of the last days. That's why the unbelief of the Jews troubled me the whole night. Of all people, they should have known. The Philippian jailer and chief of the Island of Melita knew who Paul was but it is a shame that the Jews did not! Of all people, who should be able to recognize the anointing of the man of God? It should be me. I've experienced it and heard it. I dare not say I do not see it. But pastor said, 'If you acknowledge that I am the specially anointed, then why is your life incongruent to the things you say!' I felt the ultimate answer is that we are not upright. The ultimate answer to why the Jews could not accept Paul is that they were not upright. Pastor quoted Psalm 15: who shall abide in the tabernacle? The upright. There is unbelief because I want to remain in my own ways, my own sins, my own traditions, like the Jews – to remain lackadaisical. I want to believe that all would be well, whereas the Gospel preached by the man of God is that salvation is very difficult as it is a strait gate Gospel. In my deceitfulness, I want to lower the standard of God, and not fully believe in the ministry of the servant of God. I think this is very scary. Because with my mouth I can acknowledge but my life does not tally. It is scary that Malachi ends with a curse. In the end, if we do not align with the servant of God, the curse of God will come upon us also, like the curse which came upon the Jews who rejected Paul. It is striking that the Jews had this identity crisis concerning Christ; they also had the similar identity crisis concerning Paul. It is striking that it is actually a fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah (Acts 28) – their ears are waxed gross that they cannot hear. I too have the identity crisis concerning Christ in my life. I don't think I can fully appreciate and understand the suffering Messiah; that our Messiah was the Sacrifice that had suffered. Which in turn means I also have the same identity crisis of the messenger of the Messenger of the Covenant, that is our pastor. It shook me very deeply after listening to pastor's message yesterday. In the end, I'd be the most wicked, if having known these things, I don't consecrate my life fully to Christ, and the servant of Christ, and the cause of Christ. Pray God have mercy upon me to make me a Luke that I may not be one with merely a lot of words. Luke didn't have a lot of words – he was always at the corner, and Paul didn't even realise he was there; but Luke endured to the end.

Words don't matter. In the end, it is whether you will endure together with the servant of God, in sufferings, trials and difficulties. Now it is sunny. It is easy to be fair-weather Christians. But as the battle gets fiercer, will I hold on? Will I identify myself with the Paul of our times when the whole world rejects him? Even the prominent Jewish leaders rejected Paul but Luke recognized and followed him till the end. I pray God have mercy upon me that I will truly consecrate my life wholly to the cause of Christ and of the servant of God in these last days. Thank God very much for the colossal mind of Paul and of the servant of God to understand Paul. It is very beautiful – as pastor said, all these things are in the book of Acts. What is the message? Yes, it is about the unction of the Holy Spirit, and also about the fact there is special unction of the Holy Spirit upon the special anointed of God, and it is incumbent upon us to recognize that. There is a lot to digest. Throughout a sleepless night, the message weighed heavily upon me because it shows me (1) Christ is coming back soon; (2) the anointing of the servant of God; (3) my precarious situation in that there is a lot of deceitfulness and unbelief that remain in my heart. What hope is there for me to endure to the end? I fear I will fall away like Demas; I pray God have mercy that the Holy Spirit will attest this deeply into my heart. There is nowhere else we can experience such measure of the Spirit of God, it is because of the special anointing of the servant of God, the Gospel he preaches, and the mandate God has given unto him.” Response of Esther Ng (Singapore) to pastor’s discourse on “Identity Of Those Anointed With The Holy Spirit” from the book of Acts, Part 2 (final), Cameron Highlands, Pahang, Malaysia; 22 December 2016 AD