

GCFSM SUNDAY BULLETIN

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SERMON OUTLINE

THE GOD WHO HEARS OUR CRIES

PSALM 142
REV. LITO VILLORIA

Psalm 142 is an individual prayer of lament. David wrote this in a cave as he hid from Saul. Saul wanted to eliminate David for he was a threat to his kingship. He went into the same cave where David was to relieve himself. David's men told him it was his chance to take Saul's life. But David only cut off the corner of Saul's robe knowing he could not put his hand against the Lord's anointed. So Saul was able to leave the cave safely and went on his way unharmed (1 Samuel 24:1-7).

In this psalm, David cried out to God confident that his prayers would be heard. Instead of taking matters into his own hands, David remained steadfast in the Lord. He knew God's great faithfulness would turn out for his deliverance.

At the beginning of the psalm, David cried in desperation to God. He pleaded for God's mercy. He poured out every complaint to God. And he expressed to God all his troubles (142:1-2).

When David was at a loss on what to do and where to go, he looked up to God. He was drained physically and emotionally as he ran away from Saul. His spirit fainted and he felt abandoned (142:3-4).

Then, David again cried out to God declaring God

was his refuge and hope. He pleaded for God to pay attention to him, to deliver him, and to free him from his predicament. And in the end, he thanked God in advance for he was confident he would experience His greatness and goodness (142:5-7).

This psalm is an encouragement for God's people that we can always call upon God for anything, anywhere, and anytime. We can have this assurance on the basis of our faith in Jesus Christ. As we look forward to celebrating Christmas in a few weeks' time, our sermon today will challenge us to remain steadfast in every season, no matter what circumstance, knowing Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest who hears our prayers.✱

EMPOWERED

REV. MIKE TRINIDAD

"so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light." Colossians 1:10-12

As I write this from the Conservative Baptist Association of the Philippines (CBAP) 20th Biennial Conference in Boracay, I cannot help but be awed by the wonderful work the Lord has done and continues to do through the countless CBAP pastors, workers and partners from Region 1 to Region 12. This, amidst the certain challenges that both large and small churches continue to grapple with beyond the ripple effects of the pandemic.

This biennial's theme is "Empowered", which is a potent reminder to the many pastors present who continue to labor in the Lord's vineyard against the milieu of disappointments and

challenges they face in their own varied contexts. Several pastors spoke to address the increasing number of pastors who may have gotten to the point of surrender in their ministries to hang up their gloves, so to speak.

Indeed, as God calls the laborers in the field, He alone empowers in order for them to persevere by obeying God's will for the church to grow and minister to the flock that the Lord has entrusted to them. The oft-repeated reminder given is that laborers cannot proceed on their own strengths and abilities, but rather, relying solely on God's empowerment through the Holy Spirit. While these may seem to be simple and easy to do instructions, they become not so easy to follow when faced with unfair criticism and certain challenges that they constantly face, especially as they are waylaid by the enemies' traps that leave them feeling defeated and helpless.

As pastors and laborers reap the fruits of the harvest, they need to continually live according to God's Word which guides them in all truth and

PARSON TO PERSON

leads them to the righteous path that God has laid out for them in their ministries. And as they receive the nourishment from the Word, they are then able to pass these on to their flock. The reverse, of course, is also true - they cannot give what they do not know or have.

This is the imperative that the Apostle Paul issues to the believers in Colossae which is as timely today as it was then. Endurance and patience are essential elements to pursue as pastors do the works of ministry.

As Paul also wrote in Galatians 6:9, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." I pray those who are tired and weary would draw strength and be empowered by the reminders of God through His Word.

Truly, as God calls, He empowers. Therefore, not just for pastors, but all people for that matter, should draw near to God to receive the empowerment that only God provides! ✱

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