

Public Service at Surabaya - Sunday, February 04, 2007

Colossians 4:17

17 And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."

In this life we struggle for many things, one of which is to fulfill the ministry which we have received from God.

One of the meanings of 'fulfill' is written in **Acts 20:24**.

24 "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

The meaning is implied in the sentence 'nor do I count my life dear to myself', that is to say, finishing the ministry until the end of our lives.

There are two kinds of the end of Christian's life as follows:

1. leaving the world (if God permits)
2. living till Jesus returns for the second time

We really need to struggle to work the ministry completely or until the end of our lives.

2 Peter 1:10-11

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If we fulfill the ministry, a full entrance into everlasting kingdom of heaven will be supplied to us.

While we are struggling for the full entrance, we must take heed to ourselves in order that:

- we do not stumble in the lust of money like Judas losing the full entrance and perishing forever.
- we do not sell the birthright like Esau.

Hebrews 12:16

16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

Here are the meanings of birthright:

- the right to marry with Jesus Christ (the spiritual marriage / the marriage supper of the Lamb).
In ancient times, it should not be done in Israel to give the younger before the eldest for marriage, for example, Lea and Rachel, the wives of Jacob.
- the right to inherit kingdom of heaven
Esau as the firstborn owned the birthright, but he sold it. It is a real pity!
Nowadays we are struggling to fulfill the ministry while waiting for the time to receive the full entrance to heavenly kingdom.

Now we learn the causes of Esau's selling his birthright, so that we will not follow his steps.

1. Esau was a skillful hunter.

Genesis 25:25-27

25 And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau.

26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

27 So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents.

Esau was born with these two indications

- He came out red.
Red refers to blood and symbolizes repentance. Esau was not an ordinary Christian for he represents a Christian who repents / turns back from his wickedness.
- He was like a hairy garment; hair symbolizes the anointing of Holy Spirit.
Unfortunately, in the middle of his growth Esau became a skillful hunter. In this case, Esau represents a repent Christian who walks in Holy Spirit and serves God but hunts for the flesh merely.

Today the world is run under the spirit of hunting, primarily for prosperity and comfort. Cities and villages are alive with entertainments and there are always full of comfort-hungry people. Although some people may faint, even die in the crowd, the show is still filled by scores of people. Indeed, men are hunting money/prosperity and comfort aiming at sexual sin and eating drinking. These sins are everywhere, including university campuses.

Regrettably, hunting system is applied in church as well. The spirit of hunting actually belongs to the world, but it has inserted into the Church. Now the Christians tend to hunt prosperity and comfort in the service and ministry, so that the word of God is not prioritized anymore. This is in the same analogy as Esau leaving tents to go hunting (not being shepherded).

Hunting = wandering to seek prosperity and comfort so the word of God is not prioritized anymore.

Such is not shepherded and consequently, one will fall like Esau leaving tent to hunt flesh in the field. We must beware.

All must be shepherded; the Church, pastors, elders, and evangelists. Once again, lest we walk about to seek prosperity and comfort!

Unlike Esau, Jacob loved to dwell in tents.

Tents here point to:

- a. shepherding
- b. tabernacle (tabernacle teaching/Bride Tidings/the true teaching word)

While Esau left tents to hunt the flesh, Jacob loved to dwell in tents. It means that Jacob was shepherded in the true teaching word. Both of them seem not different but some day the difference will be evident.

2. **Esau took off his choice clothes to hunt for the flesh.**

Genesis 27:15

15 Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son.

In this case, Esau represents a Christian who becomes unfaithful to the service and ministry owing to seeking daily needs (the choice clothes points to the ministry). It is not wrong to earn a living, even it is a must, but we should not take off the choice clothes just for seeking daily needs. If we often take off the choice clothes, another will put it on and there is no more chance to put it on again. This means: if we become unfaithful to the service and ministry, we someday cannot minister God anymore, losing the beautiful life and finding death. Judas, for instance, never got his office back after Matthias took it, and so did Esau who cried bitterly after Jacob took his clothes. Esau lost his beautiful life forever.

Nowadays we should be more diligent in the service and ministry. The more we become diligent, the more we see the beauty of life. I do hope that you could study for higher education and open a shop branch, but on top of that, you must be more diligent in the service and ministry for your more beautiful lives, marriages, and futures until the perfection of beauty in the marriage supper of the Lamb / becoming the Bride of God. Lest we sell the birthright like Esau!

3. **Esau sold his birthright.**

Genesis 25:29-34

29 Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary.

30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom.

31 But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day."

32 And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?"

33 Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.

34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

Esau sold his birthright because of these reasons:

- wandering and hunting the flesh (not being shepherded)
- taking off his choice clothes (being unfaithful to the service and ministry) – and he had to lose the beautiful life and die forever.

Actually, Esau possessed the birthright (a full entrance into kingdom of heaven), but finally he lost it because he was not shepherded and hunted fleshly prosperity and comfort.

Hebrews 12:16-17

16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

Esau sold his birthright just for one morsel of food so he was called a profane person or fornicator. Esau represents a Christian/pastor who loves to sacrifice spiritual matters for physical ones, primarily daily food. For example, someone told a lie just to gain one-cent profit.

Many people lie/sacrifice spiritual matters and truth just to get a little profit or food.

Be careful as there will be many Christians like Esau selling his birthright/being a fornicator until his last falling. Likewise, many will not be willing to be shepherded but wander to seek prosperity and comfort also they will be unfaithful committing service and ministry until sacrificing spiritual matters to get physical ones.

Hebrews 12:17

17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

As a consequence, Esau lost the full entrance; he cried bitterly forever since he found no place for repentance. As long as we still find a place for repentance, we may stop crying; otherwise, we will not stop crying and will dwell where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth forever.

If we are not shepherded, unfaithful, and become a fornicator by selling the birthright, we will live in this world with many tears until the tears will never stop in which there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Where there is a tear, there is not the New Jerusalem since there is no tear in New Jerusalem.

To sum up, Esau actually had a full entrance into kingdom of heaven; he had repented and served God under anointing of Holy Spirit, but unfortunately, he grew up with the wrong life style. That is to say, Esau did not dwell in tents (not being shepherded); he was unfaithful and became a fornicator. Finally, he lost his birthright and lived with many tears.

I wonder if someone is always in tears as he perhaps begins to lose the birthright and will dwell in which there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. We should not sell the birthright and should dwell in tents like Jacob. Jacob did not have the birthright, but he then got it through shepherding.

We as the Gentiles have no right to enter into kingdom of heaven, just as Jacob who was not the firstborn child, but he tried to get it and we should, too.

The following are activities in tents/shepherding:

Genesis 27:15-17

15 Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son.

16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

17 Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

- Putting on the choice clothes (verse 15); never we take this clothes off, or else, we are naked.
What does the choice clothes mean? It is the gifts of Holy Spirit. Thus, we have to continue steadfastly in General (referring to Golden Candlestick in Tabernacle), where we could serve God with the gifts of Holy Spirit. The manifestation of the gifts can be seen in those singing, playing musical instruments, also bearing witness to strengthen one another and shine brightness.
- Preparing food skillfully (verse 17).
Rebekah and Jacob were skillful in preparing food, as they liked to dwell in tents. Esau liked to hunt and it meant that he was outside tents. Activity in tents/shepherding is activity guided by the Bride Tidings. Thus, we need to continue steadfastly in Bible Study Service (referring to Table of Shewbread) where we obtain spiritual food, that is, teaching word and Holy Communion, to ripen/mature our spirituality to the degree as perfect as Jesus is.
Nowadays we must dwell in tents and not go outside like Esau to continue steadfastly in General to serve God with the gifts of Holy Spirit and in Bible Study Service to mature our spirituality with the food of God's word and Holy Communion.
- Putting the skins of the goats on hands and on the smooth part of the neck (verse 16).
Neck points to worship and so do the lifted hands. Hands and the smooth part of the neck must expose the flesh that needs to be covered. Covering hands and the smooth part of the neck means continuing steadfastly in worship (referring to Golden Altar of Incense) where we could cover the naked/sinful flesh with the love of God until there is no more flesh out in the open, no more spot and sin – for "love will cover a multitude of sins" (Peter). We should not be bored with dwelling in tents and being taught by the Bride Tidings since God's eyes are upon us. It is not wrong to pursue education and earn a living, but it should not make us forget and forsake shepherding.

In short, this is about patience in the three main services:

- Putting on the choice clothes = patience in General to serve God with the gifts of Holy Spirit
- Preparing food = patience in Bible Study to mature the spirituality by eating teaching word and Holy Communion
- Covering the naked and smooth part of the flesh = patience in Pray and Worship Service to cover sins with the love of God until no sin can be seen, and we have no spot and blemish.

Ezekiel 20:37

37 "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant

By patience in the three main services, we are counted and observed by God. As the Bible says: if a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? The man knows that one of them goes astray because he counts and the one is sought; indicating that it is observed. Similarly, if we are shepherded, God is counting and observing our lives straightly.

How great is God's attention towards the sheep under His shepherd?

- **Exodus 3:7-8**

7 And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.

God observes the deepest inner feelings, that is, sufferings due to sin, bitterness, and life and marriage problems. Nobody knows our depression, not even our husband/wife and children, but the Great Shepherd knows and He is ready to bear and deliver us from distress, and give rest.

• **Job 31:4**

4 Does He not see my ways, And count all my steps?

God observes our every step. Nobody wants to see the soles of our feet, but God does. He wants to observe the dirty parts. "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." God Himself as the Great Shepherd will count us, not man shepherd.

Our every step needs to be observed/counted by God as David said, "There is but a step between me and death." We would not be here if God were not to count our every step, for death always threatens our every heartbeat. There are three kinds of death:

- a. bodily death which always threatens every second of our life through sickness and accidents. Some doctors confess: not even to move, that we could take a breath is a wonderful miracle because who can manage every part/cell in our body? It all happens just because God observes us.
- b. spiritual death, i.e., sins
- c. hell which never stop threatening our every step

One of the manifestations of God's attention as Job confessed is testing.

Job 7:17-18

17 "What is man, that You should exalt him, That You should set Your heart on him,

18 That You should visit him every morning, And test him every moment?

God observed Job not by giving money, but testing him bitterly. Very often we misunderstand God's attention with blessings. In fact, it is not always true.

"That You should visit him every morning"; showing that it is important to have Morning Prayer to get God's attention all day long. If we do not pray in the morning, we lose God's attention the whole day. Thus, one of the manifestations of God's attention is to test us; we are tested as Job was until he came forth as pure gold, meaning that he was steadfast in faith.

Job 23:10

10 But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.

We are tested to have pure gold / pure and steadfast faith that we walk in faith/truth. Faith comes from truth, not miracle. Something that is not right is not a miracle, seeing this verse 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Many have faith because of miracle first. It cannot be so because the faith must come from truth. Thus, we are tested to have gold that is to say pure and steadfast faith so that our steps are in faith/truth. Wherever faith and truth are, death cannot touch us. Such is the attention of God to our every step that is dirty and not right.

Job was tested to take away his self-truth and so are we. Self-truth is taken away and the truth of God is brought into our lives so that death cannot touch us.

God will surely care by our faith/truth.

Psalms 37:23-26

23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand.

25 I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.

26 He is ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants are blessed.

The king David said that he had never seen the righteous forsaken even blessed by God and made a blessing to others.

God feels no enough to observe the soles of our feet; HE is not satisfied yet with the steps of faith and truth – that the righteous are blessed and made a blessing to others --, God wishes to make the soles beautiful.

Romans 10:15

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

By walking in faith, we have been delivered from death, blessed and protected by God, but God still wants to send us to preach glad tidings/Bride Tidings. It is beautiful to be sent by God. People will not hear the Bride Tidings if none brings and preaches it. Therefore, God makes a way by sending us and it is so beautiful.

Students of Lempin-EI, God will surely send you after you walk in right steps, since if you take wrong and winding steps in your life, you will not reach your destination.

Matthew 10:30

30 "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

The soles of our feet are being observed and so are our hidden feelings, but that is not enough because the very hairs of our head are all numbered by God, not even a hair is let fall.

Acts 27:34

34 "Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you."

God even counts one falling hair. If human were to count the number of their hair, they would say: "As if I have nothing to do". They would say the same if they were to count the number of pages of the Bible. This is human; they tend to neglect spiritual matters. But if they were to count the number of "green paper" inside their cupboard, they would not miss even one single bill.

Matthew 10 shows horrifying situation which is antichrist, but not even one hair is let fall and this is God's protection to the sheep under His shepherd.

Not even a hair is let fall means as follows:

- a. We are protected and observed by God. Although we are helpless just like a hair, what can a hair do? Even to be bleach is not possible and this means helpless/useless. But if we are shepherded, the Great Shepherd will protect and observe us in facing this wicked world during the antichrist era where the world will be conquered by antichrist for three years and a half. But we escape because we are hidden to a wilderness and kept there for three years and a half. This means one hair under His shepherd.
- b. We are complete/perfect and become the Bride of God.
After the antichrist, we will be transformed when Jesus comes; we become as perfect and glorious as Jesus is and become the Bride of God to receive the full entrance/the birthright.
 1. the right to marry
 2. the right to inherit kingdom of heaven

Jacob actually had not the birthright as he was not the firstborn child, but he tried through shepherding to get the attention of God from the sole of his feet/deepest feeling to the tip of his hair, so that ultimately he would have the birthright/full entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Jacob did not pursue the birthright, he was calm, but God inherited to him. Therefore, we should not go after every wish/dream, but let us be in peace in God so that God Himself will render it to us. Actually Esau had the birthright, but as he often went hunting, he lost that right and found no more place for repentance.

If there is someone like Esau today, chasing after things with tears running down his eyes, he will not get any consolation and will shed more tears. There is still time to repent and return to shepherding and let God's attention be with us.

God bless you!