

Bible Study at Surabaya - Monday, June 25, 2007

This week we are still learning the epistle of Jude, which consists of one chapter only. The more we read it, the more we find the new things of God. Lest therefore we get bored reading this. Based on Tabernacle structure, the epistle of Jude refers to the covering of badger skins, which signifies the protection and attention of God towards the true church as well as the separation from the false ones – as if was the wheat separated from the tares. The wheat were gathered into the barn but the tares were cast into fire. Take heed lest we fall into the false church!

Jude 1:11-12a

CHURCH OF THE FLESH

11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12 These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves.

What does the fleshly church look like?

1. They look like Balaam, who was a reward lover. Such a material-thing hunter lives without faith.
2. They look like Korah, who was a rebellious man (without hope and holiness).
3. They look like Cain, who was the killer of Abel his brother because of envy and hatred (without love).

We are learning about Cain. Please check the past lesson about hatred causing blindness in spirituality. Such man has no faith and cannot enter the town of light, i.e. New Jerusalem.

We learn more about Cain in **1 John 3:11-12**

11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,

12 not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

Cain murdered Abel whose works were righteous in the sight of the Lord; implying: the fleshly church hates the true church, whose works and doctrine are righteous. We must accordingly love one another in order not to be like Cain (the fleshly church).

It is five times written in the first epistle of John about “loving one another”, as follows:

1 John 3:11

11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,

1 John 3:23

23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

1 John 4:7

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

1 John 4:11

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4:12

12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

Why is the word of God on “love one another” repeated five times?

1. **That we are safe from heresies.**

Philippians 3:1b, 2

1b ... For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

2. **That the word of God is revealed deeper to increase spirituality to the extent of perfection.**

Let us now learn the five “love one another” one by one.

1. **1 John 3:11**

11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,

In this verse, the “love one another” is written as a must-be-declared message and this is the important part of the Bride Tidings, whose main point is love.

There are two reasons why “love one another” becomes the important part of the Bride. Here they are:

- a. At the end of the age many pastors and Christians will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another, all of which are the works of Antichrist.

Matthew 24:10

10 *“And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.*

Antichrist can do nothing but kill those who fail to fly into the wilderness but maintain their faith in Jesus Christ. They will be hated and killed without mercy, but they will not suffer anything if they worship Antichrist, since Antichrist is actually a Christian or a pastor who fell away and went out of us. In order not to become Antichrist or become his victim, we must love one another.

- b. Anyone who does not love his brother abides in death forever.

1 John 3:14-15.

14 *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.*

15 *Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

Seeing that, we must learn to love one another firstly among family and church members. We must always try to settle problems and misunderstandings at home to create a good relationship among family members (between a husband and a wife, between a brother and a sister), church members, until the members of the body of Christ.

2. 1 John 3:23

23 *And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*

The “love one another” is written as a commandment. See the progress: a message has now become a commandment. Thus, the word of God is repeated not statically but progressively that our spirituality is developed as well.

The “love one another” is a commandment of the Lord, which if any breaks, he comes upon himself death [since sin is lawlessness (**1 John 3:4**) and the wages of sin is death (**Romans 6:23**)]. On the other hand, if we do His commandment, the Spirit of God will abide to make us His holy temple.

1 John 3:24

24 *Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

1 Corinthians 3:16

16 *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

If the Spirit abides in us, we will become the spiritual temple of God, that is, the Body of Christ in which we are united to love one another. For example, our hands will never hurt the feet but clean the feet with soap every day. No member of our body hurts one another but loves.

Only by the Spirit’s abiding in us, it is possible to press the flesh.

Romans 8:6

6 *For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

Lusts and emotions (such as anger and quarrel), by which the church of the flesh lives, result in dry spirituality and lead to death. But the Spirit of God may press the lusts and lead us to be spiritually minded; we will be able to worship God and feel His love, be active in godliness and find joy and peace more precious than much money. Thus, whenever we get weary of going to church and serving God, we should ask God to touch and revive us with the Spirit.

3. 1 John 4:7

7 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*

“let us” denotes an invitation. Thus, the “love one another” is here written as an invitation, which means that we should invite others to love their brothers. Do not invite others without the true foundation (with emotion). Let us invite others after hearing the message of love and practicing it. The Body of Christ consists of not one person only and we therefore cannot live alone; we need to invite the others to come. As God has invited us to love one another, we must also invite the others to love one another.

1 John 4:7

7 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*

Everyone who loves is born of God and unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (**John 3:3**). By inviting the others to love one another, we invite them into heaven because we have been reborn through loving one another.

1 John 3:9

9 *Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.*

Whoever has been born of God does not sin and cannot sin sometime; he is righteous just as Jesus is righteous. Many times a husband says to his wife bitterly or with lies because there is no love. Loving one another, we have had the renewal; not committing sins until we cannot sin anymore someday. For illustration, we do not commit sin “A” and the sin has gone, then we do not commit sin “B” and the sin has gone, so on until sin “Z” so all sins have gone. We cannot commit sin anymore. In such a manner, we become righteous as Jesus is and we can see heavenly kingdom even enter it.

4. **1 John 4:10-11**

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,

The “love one another” is an example of God left for us to follow by these two practices:

- a. As Jesus has laid down His life to us, we also ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. It is easy to say, but hard to do.

1 John 3:16-17

16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

Before laying down our lives, we must firstly share material things that we have for the sake of the needy. Love begins at home. Thus, children should not forget their parents after receiving blessings, brothers and sisters should have the same care for one another until laying down our lives for others.

- b. As Jesus has laid down His life to reconcile our sins, we must therefore make reconciliation by confessing sins to God and not repeating after being forgiven, as well as to the others (confessing and forgiving one another). Do not say that you will never make reconciliation. Such is not following the example of Jesus. We have to make reconciliation to finish sin until there is no debt of sin. We have the increase of spirituality from hearing the message and commandment to love one another even we may invite others to love one another. It continues until we do not have the debt of sin. Jesus cried out, “It is finished!” on the cross. We must therefore settle our sins until there is no more debt of sin.

Romans 13:8

8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

We always have to remember that sin is the only debt unpayable by anything but the Blood of Jesus or the Cross, by confessing and forgiving one another. If the debt remains until Jesus comes the second time, it will no longer be able to be settled – even if by eternal punishment in hell. There is no different level of punishment in hell. Being in prison for three months, one may pay his debt and the world will admit it cannot be so for the debt of sin. Nothing may pay the debt of sin except the blood of Jesus.

5. **1 John 4:12**

12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

The “love one another” is written as the perfect love of God. We have to keep on loving one another, beginning with the love as a message lest we become like Cain who was the servant of the Lord but hating Abel, referring to true teaching. See that many will be offended and become antichrist.

Matthew 24:10

10 “And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

Let us now love one another until we receive the perfect love as the sun (Matthew 5).

We thus love one another until we receive the perfect love of God as it were the sun.

In these practices, the perfect love of God is manifested in our lives:

- a. **We love and pray for our enemies.**

Matthew 5:43-45, 48

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

44 “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

45 “that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

48 “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

If we can love our enemies, just imagine how much more we will love those who love us. This is the perfect love of God as the sun is made rise on the just and on the unjust; there is no more hatred but the union of the Body of Christ. Again, it is easy to say, but hard to do. The Holy Communion is the source of love that makes it possible.

- b. **We have boldness and no more fear.**

1 John 4:17-18

17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

There is no more fear, especially for spiritual matters, such as to accept the calling of God to become His full-time servant and to walk in righteousness.

In conclusion, we by the perfect love of God will be able to reject hatred (so that we may love our enemies) and defeat fear

(so that we may have boldness).

There are three kinds of boldness as follows:

A. boldness in the day of judgment

We may do have boldness in the day of judgment because we have the covering of judgment. All men in the world (including kings and those of great power) will be afraid of and desperate for the Day of the Lord (the day of judgment), and they will hide themselves in caves. No power can save! Only boldness / the perfect love of God will do. For that reason, we should not be afraid, if because of God's sake we must lose everything, such as power, position, and money. God has given us the perfect love, which is more precious than anything.

Revelation 6:15-17

15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

17 "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

While people in the world are afraid of and desperate for many kinds of trouble (such as economic problems and deadly illness), we are safe by the perfect love of God we have from Jesus' sacrifice on Golgotha.

B. boldness to come to God

1 John 3:21-22

21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.

22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

We may have boldness to come to the throne of grace of High Priest and pray without fear and doubt.

Hebrews 4:16

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

God will cannot give what we need and we will not receive anything if we are doubtful or double-minded. We must have boldness to come to the throne of God, so that:

- God will be able to help us in due time
- God will be able to settle all problems
- God will be able to give what we need

C. boldness in the Day of the Lord

1 John 2:28

28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

When Jesus Christ comes the second time as King over kings and as the heavenly Groom, we will not be afraid and ashamed, for we will have put on the clean and white garment. We know, Adam and Eve were afraid and ashamed and hid themselves as soon as they were naked and short of the glory of God, but we do not need to be afraid and desperate, afraid and doubtful, or afraid and ashamed to welcome His second coming. If you still feel afraid, you should pray that the sun (the perfect love) shines on you and casts out your fear, doubt, and shame until we have boldness before Him at His coming. The Holy Communion is the perfect love that gives us confidence toward God to rest our hope fully in Him.

God bless you!