

Ascension Service in Malang, May 17, 2012 (Thursday Evening)

John 14:1-3

14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

14:2 "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

14:3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Jesus ascends to heaven in order to prepare place for us in it, New Jerusalem.

Afterwards, He will come a second time to lift us up to the place He has prepared for us in New Jerusalem, so we can be where He is.

The process of being lifted up to heaven is as follows.

1. We are lifted up on glorious clouds when Jesus comes a second time to enter the marriage supper of the Lamb of God, namely spiritual marriage between Jesus, heavenly Bridegroom, and the perfect Church, the heavenly Bride.

Revelation 19:9

19:9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Therefore, we have to keep the righteousness and holiness of our physical marriage, beginning from the first meeting with the marriage partner, the engagement, up to the marriage.

2. [Revelation 20] We are lifted up to enter the kingdom of peace a thousand years or future paradise.
3. [Revelation 21-22] We are lifted up to enter New Jerusalem, eternal heavenly kingdom. We can be where Jesus is forever.

We will be lifted up to heaven when Jesus comes a second time while the world and its content, including the sons or servants of God who are left in it, are being destroyed by the fire of God's judgment.

Tonight we commemorate Jesus' ascension to heaven so we can also be lifted up to heaven when He comes a second time.

2 Peter 3:10-12

3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

3:11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 3:12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

The requirement of being lifted up to heaven when Jesus comes a second time is **holiness**.

Hebrews 12:14

12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

We cannot see God if we have no holiness.

Now it means one cannot worship God if there is no holiness. Consequently, there will be spiritual dryness.

It also means that in the future one cannot see Jesus face to face on glorious clouds when He comes a second time but be left in the world and perish together with the world.

There are four tools or mediums of sanctification as follows.

1. Jesus' blood.
2. The true teaching Word or sanctification Word, the Word that is sharper than any two-edged sword.
3. Whip or the chastening of God.
4. Hope of Jesus' second coming. It equals to the sprinkling of blood.
The sprinkling of blood is suffering without any sin together with Jesus in order to sanctify us so we can be lifted up to heaven when Jesus comes a second time.

Whoever we are, how unclean and evil we are, we can be lifted up on heaven if we want to live in holiness.

ad. 1. Jesusâ€™ blood.

The sanctification done by Jesusâ€™ blood refers to the sanctification to past sins.

Unfinished sins contain curse or accusation, so they must be sanctified. They include sin in our saying, deed, or thought and heart.

1 John 1:7,9

1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The process of sanctification done by Jesusâ€™ blood is through confessing sins honestly to God and other people. Afterwards, Jesusâ€™ blood will actively do these things.

- a. To forgive our sins and to cover them until there is no remnant of them. It is as if we never do such sin.
- b. To pull out the root of sin so we will not do the sin anymore. It equals to living in righteousness.

We experience the the grace of God that lifts us up and heals us, so we are not judged by God and we do not perish. We are saved.

For example, King David was a great king but he could fall in deep sin, namely adultery with Bathsheba. He should have been destroyed with all his kingdom and marriage but he could confess his sin. Now, commemorating Jesusâ€™ ascension, God will lift us up with His grace if we confess our sins.

Psalm 51:1-3

51:1 <<To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.>>Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.

51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin.

51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. Untuk pemimpin biduan.

Praise the Lord, King David confessed his sin so he was forgiven and justified. The merciful hand of God lifted him up and forgave him so there was no judgment and perdition.

The merciful hand of God will also lift us up and heal us to make us the apple of His eye if we want to confess our sins to God and other people honestly tonight.

ad. 2. The true teaching Word or sanctification Word or the Word sharper than any two-edged sword.

John 15:3

15:3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

The sanctification done by the true teaching Word is the sanctification for our sin at present.

The true teaching Word is as follows.

- a. The Word written in bible.
We have to read the bible if we want to receive the true teaching Word, do not read other books!

1 Timothy 4:13

4:13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Reading the bible, we will get the true teaching Word building our spirituality. Reading other books, our spirituality will fall.

- b. The Word said by Jesus Himself or the Word which is revealed through a verse explaining another verse in the anointing of Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 4:12-13

4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any twoâ€edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

The sword of Godâ€™s Word sanctifies us, beginning from our heart that is the storehouse of wicked and unclean lusts resulting in wickedness and uncleanness in saying and deeds up to the whole life.

Matthew 15:19

15:19 "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

If the heart is filled with seven wicked and unclean lusts, he will be perfect in wicked and unclean deeds and saying as the Babylon that will perish.

If our heart is sanctified from the seven wicked and unclean lusts, our saying and deeds will be holy up to our whole life until someday we will be perfect.

The true teaching Word is as a brake that we do not fall in sin. It equals to sanctification to our present life.

For example, the woman of Canaan or the Gentile who lived in wickedness and uncleanness. She was like sow returning to her wallowing in mire or living in sins up to the peak, namely sins concerning eating-drinking and marrying-being given in marriage. Her saying was also wicked and unclean as a dog licking its vomit. Consequently, the marriage and children were destroyed.

Tongue that is like dog licking its vomit is in lies or slander and vain words that bring perdition.

Praise the Lord that the woman was willing to be sanctified by the sharp sword of God's Word.

Matthew 15:26-27

15:26 But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

15:27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

The woman did not deny when the Lord showed her wicked and unclean life which was as a dog. She got the sanctification to her heart and tongue until she could lick the crumbs. It means she could confess her sin and faults. Moreover she could bear witness and worship God.

As a result, the merciful hand of God is able to lift us up and heal us from a dog to His shepherded sheep or the apple of His eye. The true sheep will only eat Shepherding Word, not hear strange voice, and be only in sheepfold through perseverance in doing three main services to God as follows.

- Golden Candlestick -->perseverance in doing General Service.
- Table of Showbread -->perseverance in doing Bible Study Service with Holy Communion.
- Golden Altar of Incense -->perseverance in doing Prayer Service.

As a result, the child could be healed, meaning all our problems can be settled.

The shepherding is a place to make firm our life as the apple of God's eye, so the mercy of God can work to solve all our problems. It is a place to make all impossible problems possible.

Judas was a great apostle but he could not receive the hard Word of God so he always said "It is not me." He had great spirituality because he offered all things to follow Jesus but he kept his wickedness and uncleanness because of criticizing and rejecting the Word. Finally, he hang himself and fell headlong as a serpent. The woman above could be lifted up from dog to sheep but Judas decreased to become serpent that perished. It all depends on our attitude to the Word. We have to be alert!

ad. 3. The chastening of God.

Hebrews 12:10

12:10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

The chastening is also the sanctification for present sin.

Why does the chastening come? Because of the rejection to the true teaching Word.

How hard the teaching Word is, it is the stretched hand of God. If the teaching Word is rejected, the cords of God's mercy will be twisted to become a whip to chasten us so that **we can return to holiness**. The whip is still also the mercy of God.

If the chastening is still rejected, God will let such life as an illegitimate son. He will lose the cords of God's mercy and only wait for the perdition.

Jonah 1:1-4

1:1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

1:2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me."

1:3 But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

1:4 But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.

The examples are as follows.

1. Jonah, the servant of God He employs, who disobeys God.
He was commanded to go to Niniveh but he went to Tarshis, meaning as follows.
 - o Ministering but it is not in line with the true teaching Word.
 - o Leaving the service and ministry.

Being disobedient means running away from God or being far away from Him and being near to wickedness and uncleanness as well as perdition.

The Lord helped Jonah with chastening until the boat was hit by stormy seas. All the members of the congregation, referring to all people in the boat, will feel the disobedience of a servant of God. We have to be alert.

Jonah was chastened until he was swallowed by a big fish. He lived in darkness and suffering.

Praise the Lord, he could confess and get the exalting power of God. The grace of God lifted him up and made him the apple of His eye.

2. Peter, whose heart was doubtful to the true teaching Word.

Matthew 14:25-26,30-31

14:25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.

14:26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

14:30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Peter was doubtful, so his mouth became bad saying Jesus as ghost. It refers to slandering the true teaching Word. Consequently, he was chastened by God until he almost sank, meaning decreasing in spirituality up to failure. Praise the Lord, he could stretch his hand and believe in the Lord. His mouth cried the name of the Lord and there was stretched hand of God's grace that lifted him up and healed him.

3. The criminal beside Jesus. Even a criminal or transgressor could be lifted up by Jesus. The criminal experienced total failure but he could confess Jesus at that time.

Luke 23:39-43

23:39 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."

23:40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?"

23:41 "And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong."

23:42 Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

23:43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

The criminal could confess his sin and fault as well as worship Jesus. As a result, He stretches His merciful hand to lift us up to return to heaven.

Jesus has been ascended to heaven and someday we will be lifted up through our holiness and the cord of God's mercy.

God blesses you.