

General Service in Malang, April 22, 2012 (Sunday Morning)

Matthew 26:69-75 is about **Peter denied Jesus**.

Peter denied Jesus three times as follows:

1. Verse 69-70: Peter denied Jesus of Galilee. It equals to denying the calling and election of God.
2. Verse 71-72: Peter denied Jesus of Nazareth.
3. Verse 73-75: Peter denied Jesus even cursed and swore.

ad. 2. Peter denied Jesus of Nazareth

Matthew 26:71-72

26:71 *And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth."*

26:72 *But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!"*

Luke 1:26-27,31

1:26 *Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,*

1:27 *to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.*

1:31 *And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.*

Nazareth is the place where Jesus began to become flesh in the womb of Mary.

Luke 2:51-52

2:51 *Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.*

2:52 *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

Nazareth is the place where Jesus grew physically.

In shorts, physically Nazareth is the place where Jesus began to become flesh in the womb, up to the maturity. Spiritually, Nazareth is the place for spiritual growth from salvation up to full maturity (perfection) as Jesus.

The place of spiritual growth equals to the shepherding.

Peter denied Jesus of Nazareth means **Peter denied the true shepherding**.

The consequence of denying the shepherding is as follows:

- Not experiencing spiritual growth, such that the spiritual level is as children who are easily tossed to and fro and carried about with false teaching.

Ephesians 4:14

4:14 *that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,*

- Walking about until meeting lion, that is false teaching that deceives and devastates.

1 Peter 5:8

5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

The main need of sheep is shepherd. Therefore, Jesus appears as the Good Shepherd.

John 10:11

10:11 *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*

Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. Likewise, pastor must also learn to sacrifice for the sheep until be able to give his life.

If Jesus has appeared as the Good Shepherd, we also have to appear as good sheep. It means that we are well shepherded, such that Jesus makes everything good even perfect as Him.

The tasks of Good Shepherd are as follows:

1. Going before the sheep.

John 10:4

10:4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

It means as follows:

- Being fully responsible for the sheep, that is being responsible to feed the sheep, to protect the sheep.

Giving example for the sheep, especially steps example, such that we will not be deceived.

1 Peter 2:21-24

2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

2:22 Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth;

2:23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness"by whose stripes you were healed.

Outside God's steps, we will fall, go down, get lost, and be perished.

Sheep must follow the steps of Good Shepherd, those are death step and resurrection step. It is started from water baptism.

Romans 6:2-4

6:2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

The true water baptism is we experience death from sins, we are buried with Jesus in water, and then we are raised with Jesus in newness of life.

Death step equals to dying to sin. It means as follows:

- [1 Peter 2:22] Not doing sins, not lying.
- [1 Peter 2:23] Not repaying evil with evil, but repaying evil with good things.

Resurrection step equals to new life, life for righteousness.

1 Peter 2:24

2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness"by whose stripes you were healed.

If we die to sin and live for righteousness and we want to follow Jesus' steps, we will experience the power of His stripes which heal us physically and spiritually. Being healthy spiritually means:

- We keep being fervent in spirit in following God.
- Not doing sins in any situations or conditions.
- Life depends on faith, life from God.

2. Calling the sheep by name.

John 10:3

10:3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

John 10:27-28

10:27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

10:28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

When the sheep is called, it must follow the Shepherd's voice. It means being obedient to the Shepherd's voice personally. Do not be disturbed by the others.

Two things that must be remarked about the Shepherd's voice are as follows:

- Do not consider the Shepherd's voice (the true shepherding Word) as a strange thing.

Hosea 8:12,11

8:12 I have written for him the great things of My law, But they were considered a strange thing.

8:11 Because Ephraim has made many altars for sin, They have become for him altars for sinning.

Considering the Shepherd's voice (the true shepherding Word) as a strange thing means do not want to listen, but grumbling, criticizing, until do not want to obey the true shepherding Word according to the Holy Bible. They only add more sins when they serve God more.

- Do not listen to a strange voice which is not similar to the true shepherding Word.

John 10:5

10:5 Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

A strange voice includes flesh voice, gossips whose truth cannot be accounted, also false teaching which is clearly different from the Holy Bible. Eve only listened the strange voice once and she fell. We must be careful.

2 Kings 4:38-40

4:38 And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said to his servant, Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.

4:39 So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, though they did not know what they were.

4:40 Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, Man of God, there is death in the pot! And they could not eat it.

Within the strange voice, there is death which devastates spirituality.

John 10:27-28

10:27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

10:28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

Good sheep listen and obey the shepherding Word, such that we live within the hands of Good Shepherd who gives the certain guarantee of eternal life. It means that within shepherding we are purified continually until our names are written in the book of life.

3. Leading the sheep.

John 10:3

10:3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

The shepherding Word is as the two hands of Good Shepherd which lead the sheep:

- To enter the fold.

Physical fold is church with its own organization. Spiritual fold is the Holy Place, where there are three pieces of equipment as follows:

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

If we are within the fold, we will be counted by God. It means we are cared, protected, and blessed by God.

- To outside the fold, that is fellowship with sheep from another fold, such that we become one flock with one Shepherd.

John 10:16

10:16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

It equals to entering the true fellowship of the body of Christ, entering the true building of the body of Christ, according to the true teaching Word.

John 1:48-51

1:48 Nathanael said to Him, *How do You know me?* Jesus answered and said to him, *Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.*

1:49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, *Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!*

1:50 Jesus answered and said to him, *Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.*

1:51 *And He said to him, Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.*

The abundance within the shepherding must be brought outside, and God will never fool us since we will see heaven open. God will pour physical and spiritual blessing (descending angel), and we will experience God's lifting power (ascending angel).

- To the last fold in the throne of New Jerusalem.

Revelation 7:17

7:17 *for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.*

The proof that we are heading for the New Jerusalem is experiencing renewal.

Revelation 21:1

21:1 *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*

James 1:6

1:6 *But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.*

Renewal is started from there is no more sea, that is no more doubts, but believing and fully surrendering to Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Thus God will stretch out His merciful and good hands, which will lead us to the living fountain of waters.

- The merciful and good hands of God guarantee our life, and make possible the impossible things.
- The merciful and good hands of God wipe away every tear from our eyes.
- The merciful and good hands of God purify and renew our life, starting from purification of eight sins until there is no more lies.

Revelation 21:8

21:8 *But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

God blesses us.