

General Service in Malang, June 23, 2013 (Sunday Morning)

On the cross.

Peace and grace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:20b

28:20 and lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the age. Amen.

The accompaniment of God is our main need. In Exodus 33, Moses asks for the accompaniment of God during the journey in the wilderness to Canaan. The Israelites harden their heart and get bad news that God does not go with them. He sends an angel to make war and bring them to Canaan, but Moses does not want to go and asks for the accompaniment of God. Now, we also ask for the accompaniment of God during our journey in this world that is as the wilderness until we reach the New Jerusalem or the eternal kingdom of Heaven.

There are two forms of the accompaniment of God to Moses as follows.

1. The grace [verse 12-17].
2. The glory of God [verse 18-23].

Exodus 33:23

33:23 Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.

Moses saw the glory of God from His back, so he could write the five first books of Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), that contain the things that had happened far away before Moses was born.

Revelation 1:12-13,16

1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

1:13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

1:16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

In the New Testament, John saw the glory of God from the front, namely the face of Jesus, so he could write the last five books in Bible (the gospel according to John, the first, second, and third epistle of John, and the Revelation) that contain the things that have not happened yet but will happen for sure.

In the last days, the church of God sees His glory on the whole, that is seeing His heart that is filled with eternal love. Where can we see and experience the love of God?

1. 1 John 4:9-10

4:9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

4:10 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.

Christian lives must be ready to bear the cross with God, because there we can feel the love of God.

2. In the shepherding.

John 10:11

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

John 15:13

15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Jesus the good shepherd gives His life for us. This is the greatest love. Do not become a Christian life who walks about. We must be within the sheepfold so we can see and feel the love of God. Thus, our love will not grow cold.

3. In the worship prayer.

Ephesians 5:25

5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Jesus is the Head and the congregation is the body. The relation between the Head and the body is the neck, namely the worship prayer. It is the spiritual marriage relationship, the closest relation with Jesus. In the worship prayer, we can feel the love of God.

Ephesians 3:18-19

3:18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height

3:19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

We pray for many things, but particularly we must pray so that we can understand and comprehend, see and experience what is the width and length and depth and height of the love of Christ.

The practices of the love of Christ in our daily life are as follows.

1. The depth and height of the love of Christ. It equals to ascending and descending.

Ephesians 4:8-12

4:8 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."

4:9 (Now this, "He ascended" what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

4:10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

Jesus descended into the lowest parts of the earth. It equals to the depth of His love when He dies on the cross.

Jesus descended to Hades to lead the captivity captive. If we see and feel the depth of His love, we must be set free from sins that captivate us in death or perdition.

At least, the proofs are as follows.

- We must be set free from lies. We must say good and right words.

Isaiah 28:15

28:15 Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, It will not come to us, For we have made lies our refuge, And under falsehood we have hidden ourselves."

- We must be set free from hatred without any reasons, envy, revenge, and bitterness. We must learn to love the others as ourselves, until we can love the one who is hostile to us. We can repay evil with good.

1 John 3:14

3:14 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.

Jesus ascended to give us gifts, those are the ministries, so we can become priests and kings.

Revelation 1:5-6

1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

1:6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

If we can see and feel the depth and height of God's love, we must be set free from sins (starting from lies and hatred), and become priests and kings to be used in the ministry of the building of the body of Christ. This kind of servant of God is bound in the spirit.

Acts 20:22

20:22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

The depth and height of the love of Christ sets us free from being bound in death to being bound in the spirit.

Acts 20:17-20, 22-24

20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

20:18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what

manner I always lived among you,

20:19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

20:20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,

20:22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

20:23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

20:24 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 signs of being bound in the spirit are as follows.

- Serving with all humility, meaning the ability to confess our sins.

We must serve God without the burden of sins. If we still bear the burden of sins, we will not be able to serve God.

Humility also means the ability to consider the others more than ourselves, so we can work together with the others.

- Serving with many tears, meaning serving God with sincerity and sacrifices, as Jesus who sheds His blood at Gethsemane.
- Being faithful to the end line, that is until we die or until Jesus comes for a second time.
Being unfaithful means being bound back in death.

2. The width and length of the love of Christ.

Ephesians 5:25-27

5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

5:27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

The practice is washing us with the water and the Word. It means as follows.

- Sanctifying us.

The water refers to water baptism. The true water baptism is that the one who has repented is buried together with Jesus in water to raise together with Him and get new life, namely the life in righteousness.

After being dived in water baptism, we must be dived in the water of true teaching Word, especially in Bible Study Service with Holy Communion.

Matthew 15:19

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

We must experience sanctification starting from the heart that is the store of sins. It must be continued with sanctification of deeds and words, until we are perfect and without blemish.

James 3:2

3:2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

We only say "Alleluia" until we are ready to welcome His second coming.

- Renewing us from flesh man to become the spiritual one as Jesus, starting from being obedient.

When we are obedient, we are writing in our heart that we love God more than everything. Thus, we will not be separated from God in any circumstances.

Romans 8:35

8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Vice versa, God also does not want to be separated from us. The saying "where I am, there My servant will be also" is only applicable for husband and wife. It means that we are renewed until we become the bride of God.

John 12:26

12:26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

The woman who is caught in adultery represents one who totally fails, lives in sins up to the peak of sins, and faces impossibility. She is in fear and being humiliated. She has gloomy future and faces death. But Jesus wants to write twice. The first writing is the depth and height of Christ's love that lifts us up from sins and makes us the servant of God. The second writing is the width and length of Christ's love that purifies and renews our life.

John 8:11

8:11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

Let us also write back that we love God more than everything. We throw away the sins and live in righteousness. We can be the servant of God and obey Him. Thus, He is able to provide everything. He helps us and erases all impossibilities. He lifts us up and restored our life until we become His bride who sits together with Him on the throne of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:16,19

21:16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.

21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,

In the New Jerusalem, we enjoy the width and length and depth and height of God's love forever.

God blesses us.