

General Service in Malang, September 11, 2011 (Sunday Morning)

Matthew 26:26-29 is about **EATING HOLY COMMUNION**.

Matthew 26:17-25 is the last Passover.

The last Passover equals to the first Holy Communion.

In the past, eating the Passover was eating unleavened bread and roasted flesh of lamb.

Now, eating Holy Communion is eating the body of Christ and drinking the blood of Christ.

The regulations of eating the Passover/ Holy Communion:

Exodus 12:9

12:9 Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire its head with its legs and its entrails.

1. Do not eat raw flesh.

Raw flesh equals to flesh desire.

Thus, **we cannot eat Holy Communion with the fire of flesh lust, but we must be set free from the fire of flesh lust and sins.**

2. Do not boil it with water.

Water denotes the freshness or the influence of the world.

James 4:4

4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

The effect of the freshness of the world makes God's children or God's servant become disobedient in ministering God.

Thus, **we must eat Holy Communion with faithfulness in ministry.**

Matthew 17:14-15

17:14. And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying,

17:15 "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.

Be watchful!

The fire of flesh lust (sins) and the water of the world's freshness always target God's servants.

Life who is played by the fire of flesh lust and the water of the world's freshness equals to life who suffers epilepsy (spiritual epilepsy).

Luke 17:28-30

17:28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;

17:29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

17:30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

An epilepsy has disturbed human life since the days of Lot;

- They ate and drank, got married and being given in marriage = playing with the fire of flesh lust.
- They planted and built, they bought and sold = playing with the water of the world's freshness.

People are active in physical activities, but not in spiritual activities.

We must work and study hard, but all those activities must not make us be unfaithful (not active) in spiritual activities, that is the building body of Christ.

The consequence of living in the fire of flesh lust and the water of the world's freshness is entering the fire and brimstone judgment.

From the whole Sodom-Gomorrah (one city, one country), there were only three people who were saved.

This condition will happen again in the last days, that is approaching Jesus' second coming (**Luke 17:30**), **many God's children play with the fire of flesh lust or sins, and being unfaithful (even leaving) the ministry.**

The consequence is experiencing the fire of God's judgment which will destroy the earth and all its contents until being drowned into the lake of fire burning with brimstone (the hell) forever.

II Peter 3:9-10

3:9. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

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.

Revelation 20:14-15

20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

20:15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Be watchful! Do not play with "fire" and "water" (living in sins and unfaithfulness)!

God's judgment surely will come.

Regret always comes later. Therefore, it is better if we start to believe from now!

If until today God has not punished us yet, if we are still given life and God has not come for the second time yet, that is the longsuffering of God.

The aim of God's longsuffering is such that we can repent and come back to God.

We must pray solemnly and ask God for a release.

Mark 9:21

9:21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood.

A spiritual epilepsy hits all levels of society (from the highest one to the poorest) and all ages (from the youngest to the oldest), even it will hit the healthy and disable.

It is important to take children to Sunday school!

The meanings of spiritual epilepsy are as follows:

1. Decadency of moral, such that people live in uncleanness and lawlessness.

Lawlessness means rebelling God (the word of God), being unfaithful, rebelling the parents, and cannot be advised.
Do not let the children rebel the parents since their childhood!

2. Physical and spiritual suffering, there are many difficulties and tears.
Not only an epileptic life who suffers for the illness, but also the others (husband, wife, parents, and children).
3. There is no beautiful future, especially spiritual future.
4. Unsolved problems (impossible problems).

All these things hit God's children and God's servant (no longer people generally).

God's ways to help are as follows:

1. "Bring him to Me" is the voice of Gospel Word, God's call. It denotes the perseverance in General Service (Golden Candlestick).

Mark 9:19

9:19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

This is the first step to be helped by God.

If we are not brought to God, we will never be helped at any time.

2. Jesus rebuked hard = the voice of teaching Word which rebukes hard, sharper than any two-edged sword. It denotes the perseverance in Bible Study Service with Holy Communion (Table of Showbread).

Mark 9:25

9:25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!"

The true teaching Word and Holy Communion are an extra strength to face the fire of flesh lust or sins, and the water of the world's freshness which will perish us.

3. "the father of the child cried out and said with tears" = the voice of worship prayer. It denotes the perseverance in Prayer Service (The Golden Altar of Incense).

Mark 9:22-24

9:22 *And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."*

9:23 *Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."*

9:24 *Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"*

Father or husband is the image of strength.

More than the struggles to provide for the family, it is important that all of us struggle to offer worship prayers to God.

Thus, **only by shepherding system we can beat or overcome spiritual epilepsy.**

There is no other way out, we must persevere in shepherding!

Whatever our condition, let us bring our life in shepherding. **God Himself will care, help, and set us free from epilepsy.**

In shepherding system, **God as the Great Shepherd restores our spiritual life first, until we can STRETCH OUT OUR HANDS TO GOD.**

When we can stretch out both our hands to God, we already get everything.

The example is Peter, the image of great senior of God's servant, but he still needs to be restored through the shepherding system.

John 21:15-19

21:15. *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs."*

21:16 *He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep."*

21:17 *He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."*

21:18 *Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."*

21:19 *This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."*

Being able to stretch out our hands to God is the measure of spiritual maturity.

Through the perseverance in three main services (three questions of Jesus), Peter was able to realize his lacks and his denial to Jesus.

In everything that Peter did, Peter had no love although he served Jesus diligently.

In shepherding system, **Jesus only waits we are able to stretch out both our hands to God, that is**

- Being obedient whatever the risk.
- Being willing to sacrifice everything for God.
- Loving God more than everything.

Mark 9:22-24

9:22 *And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."*

9:23 *Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."*

9:24 *Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"*

In the family whose child suffered epilepsy, God also helped spiritual weakness first.

After being corrected, the father of that child actually did not believe God. It equals to having no faith.

Having no faith means as follows:

- Starting to be uncertain when facing false teaching, and considering all teachings are equal or it is okay if it only differs a bit.
- Starting to be doubtful when facing temptations.

Through shepherding system, we can BELIEVE AND FULLY SURRENDER OUR LIFE TO GOD.

Spiritual problems cannot be born physically. Great smartness and richness will not be able to help us. We need to stretch out both our hands to God, believe and fully surrender our life to God.

Mark 9:26-27

9:26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead."

9:27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

Many times when we start to learn stretching out our hands, believing and fully surrendering to God, it seems that everything get worse (the epileptic child looks dead).

If we want to be quick, there will be only recovery power.

But, God also wants to show rising power,^Â that is

- **Rising power to provide spiritual miracle.**

We experience renewal of life from clay pot to become golden pot that had the manna.

We are set free from sins and we can life in new life, that is righteous life and being active in the building body of Christ.

- **Rising power to provide physical miracle.**

Impossible problems will become possible.

God also provides beautiful and happy future.

The steps in shepherding system are the steps of spiritual miracles, and will be followed by physical miracles.

On Jesus' second coming, the last step is we become as perfect as Him and we will be lifted to the glorious clouds to be together with Him forever.

God blesses us.