

DEVELOPING THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23 NIV)

In the month of May 2024, we as His church will commemorate two historic days for His church, namely first, the commemoration of the day of CHRIST'S ASCENSION into heaven (May 9 2024), namely after 40 days He declared His resurrection, which we commemorate in 2024 on March 31 a month prior. Second, the commemoration of PENTECOST (May 19 2024), which occurred 10 days after the day of His ascension. These two historical days are important for us, because they remind us of the message conveyed by the angel at the time of His ascension that Jesus would come again in the same way (Acts 1:10-11). This also reminds us of the promise given to every follower of Christ after His ascension and after the Holy Spirit was poured out to make them and all of us His witnesses (Acts 1:8; 2:38-40). The significance or meaning of these two historical days still continues to work today, even until the Lord Jesus comes a second time.

These events also remind us of the birth of the early church and the formation of the basic principles of life of the first congregation as a family of God who have the character of Christ (Acts 2:41-47; 1 John 2:6; 3:7). These principles of living as members of God's family like Christ are what we will reflect on throughout the month of May-June. The way of life of the first congregation shows the way of life of God's family that develops the character of Christ (Galatians 5:22-23). The main theme in 2024 is "Becoming a church that is ready and alert" (Luke 12:40; Matthew 24:42) and there are six (6) sub-main themes of this year's main theme that we will reflect on together. We have gone through two (2) sub-main points over the past four months and it is hoped that these two sub-topics can further prepare us to welcome His coming and until He comes we need to continue developing the character of Christ until we become like Christ. And in the months of May-June we will reflect further on God's plans for us, His family. These themes will be discussed interactively both through the Sunday sermon series and at every PERAK (Family Fellowship) & PERKASA (Fellowship Between Friends) meeting. Let us remain united to develop the character of Christ. God has appointed us to be part of His family which can be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone (Ephesians 2:19-20).

Specifically on Thursday, May 9 (the commemoration of Christ's ascension) to May 18 2024, for 10 days simultaneously we as His congregation will hold a Day of Prayer & Fasting together by humbling ourselves before Him. We remember that at the event of Christ's Ascension, His disciples were commanded to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Father's promise. The Bible says, “they all persevered with one accord in PRAYER TOGETHER, with some of the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with the brothers of Jesus” (Acts 1:14). As God's family, they diligently waited for the Father's promise and after 10 days passed, God fulfilled what He had promised. On the day of Pentecost they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, they proclaimed great deeds to all nations and with the same character as Christ they were used as His witnesses. This is also our hope. Happy commemoration of Christ's ascension and also happy Pentecost Day. Lord Jesus is with us, Amen!

By Pastor Silwanus Obadja M.Th.