

## **KEEP BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST**

„For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who died for us, so that whether we are awake, whether we sleep, we may live together with Him. Therefore, advise one another and build one another up, as you are doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11)

In May 2023, we, as His church will commemorate two historic days for Christ's followers, namely first, the anniversary of the ASCENSION of CHRIST to heaven (May 18 2023) after 40 days since He declared Himself from His resurrection. Second, the commemoration of PENTACOST (May 28, 2023), which occurred 10 days after His ascension. These two historical days are important for us, because they remind us of the message delivered by the angels at the time of His ascension that Jesus will return in the same way, which can be seen with the eyes (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 meaning of these two historical days is still working to this day, even until the Lord Jesus comes the second time.

These events also remind us of the birth of the early church and the formation of the basic principles of life for the first congregation as God's family (Acts 2:41-47). It is these principles of life as members of God's family that we will meditate on throughout the month of May-June. The way of life of the first congregation shows the way of life of God's family as longed for by God. The main theme for 2023 is "Become a mature church and spread the Gospel" (Ephesians 4:13; Matthew 24:14) and there are six (6) sub-main topics of this year's main topic that we will meditate on together. We have gone through two (2) main sub-topics and it is hoped that these two sub-themes can bring us into the process of maturity and eventually become followers of God who preach the Gospel. And in this month of May-June we will reflect further on God's plan for us, His family. These topics will be discussed interactively both through the Sunday sermon series and in every meeting of PERAK (Cell Group for Families) & Komsel PERKASA (Cell Group for Friends). Let's stay united to fulfill God's plan for us His church. God has ordained 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). Therefore let's keep advising and building each other up (1 Thess. 5:9-11).

Specifically on Thursday, May 18 (the anniversary of Christ's ascension) until May 27, 2023, for 10 days simultaneously we as His congregation will hold Prayer & Fasting together, humbling ourselves before Him. We remember that in 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 PRAYING 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 await the Father's promise and after passing 10 days, God fulfills what He has promised. On the day of Pentecost they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they preached great deeds to all nations. This is also our hope. Let His power also be poured out so that we can do the great harvest of souls in the last days. Therefore, happy commemorating Christ's ascension and also happy Pentecost. Lord Jesus with us, Amen!

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