

Keep Your Garment Pure

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Date: 19 August 2001

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[0 : 00] This is the evening service at Holy Trinity on the 19th of August 2001. The preacher is Jacob Kawashi and his sermon is entitled Keep Your Garment Pure. It is based on Revelation chapter 14 verses 1 to 5.

I don't know that Steve is a prophet. When he stood here he said tonight you're going to hear from Africa.

And you did prophesy precisely correct. At least this afternoon I spoke with my wife on telephone and she told me that she met Paul yesterday.

And he had a good time. She was overwhelmed with the kind of man he is. She said he's just a good man. And she kept saying he's just a good man.

I said listen you're talking about man. Mind you he's not married. Anyway Paul is a good man. He's a good friend of mine.

[1 : 16] He's a good man. But she said I can't believe it. When I was about to leave he picked the bags I sent him with. And he's the one who took it to the car for her.

I said that's natural. That's natural here. If you couldn't believe it of course in Africa a man would not do such a thing. Especially for a woman. But it was a nice time.

So my wife said. So Paul is doing very well. And he's having a good time. Tomorrow being Monday by the grace of God. They will be leaving very early in the morning for Yola.

Where he will be preaching. For. At a conference of. About 16,000 people in attendance. In fact. It's an annual conference.

So Paul will be there. And I guess he's going to have a nice time. Tonight we're going to look at the passage just read to us.

[2 : 16] Shall we bow our heads as we pray together. Father we ask that you please speak to us from your word. Especially as we look forward.

To greater times. Greater moments to be with you. And we ask that you speak. Especially when the days are drawing closer every now and then. Speak to us in the understanding that we will be able to understand you.

And help us to do precisely that which you want us to do. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen. I feel more comfortable here than over there.

And I'll be. I'll be able to move anytime I want to move. I just want to put this at the back of your mind as we look at this very passage.

It happened to me. When we got married very new. About three and a half weeks old. And traditionally as far as new couples are concerned.

[3 : 28] You and your wife you need to walk around. For almost one month. With the same material. Like if I'm wearing this color.

My wife will be wearing the same color. But designing and fashion for women and things like that. So it's a traditional thing with us. And.

One of our members. She was one time deputy governor of Kaduna State. And she invited us for dinner. In her house. I thought it was going to be just dinner for about four, five, six people.

Or so. Until I got there. And thank God my wife insisted that. We must raise. She kept saying look. We must put on something nice.

I said beautiful. Fine. So we decided to put on. I was wearing something long like this. But of course one of the white colors. So I was wearing pure white.

[4 : 26] From head to toe. With the exception of the shoes. And she wore the same thing. And we went for this dinner. Believe you me.

I couldn't believe my eyes. Those who were invited. Dignitaries. People that are far ahead of Jacob. In everything. In everything. I saw myself as the only little aunt.

Living among elephants. Great people were there. So great. And then we were serve food.

Naturally back at home.

I love. I like so much of pounded yam. You may not know pounded yam. But if you mash potato.

The way you mash potato in order to eat.

That's exactly the way. Pounded yam is far bigger than potato. So you boil it. And then you pound it. To become like a mashed potato. But it's very starchy.

[5 : 23] And then you have a bowl of soup. Made from palm oil. And palm oil is great. So the soup will be great. With some ingredients anyway.

So I was served with this. The pounded yam. And the soup. And everything was placed on the table. And the woman insisted. I should pray before we start eating.

But one thing that really happened. Is that the moment they served me. I picked the spoon. And I dipped the spoon into the soup. And I kept it. And I was just there. Pausing and really cruising as a big man.

My wife said to me. Be careful the way you put that spoon. Be careful the way you put that spoon.

And she said it the second time. I became angry. I looked at her. I said this is not the first time.

That I'm eating with big men. In the gathering like this. Will you leave me alone? And then the woman said. Jacob.

[6 : 22] You are my pastor. I want you to pray for us. I just put my hand on the table. To stand up to pray. Accidentally my left hand just went into the.

I mean pushed the spoon. And the spoon now splashed. The red soup over my chest. The whole hall.

It was about 25 people in attendance. Big men. Everybody just went. Woo. I look at my chest.

I couldn't believe it. My wife just quietly bowed her head. It was really terrible. I was shaking.

I couldn't pray. I managed to get a momentum and courage. And I prayed anyway. But throughout that period. I wasn't myself. Because.

[7 : 24] The lady quickly took me to her room. Trying to wash it. It refused to come out of course. I wasn't myself. But one thing that kept ringing into my brain.

Is that. My wife said to me. She said it twice. Be careful. The way you put that spoon. Be careful.

The way you put that spoon. Revelation chapter 14.

Tonight brothers. We look at it. It's one of the books. That somebody in Nigeria said. He will never preach from Revelation. He's a minister. He said to me. Look Jacob.

I'm not going to preach from Revelation. I said why? He said at the end of the book of Revelation.

Look at what John said. John said. Anyone who adds to it. It will be added. The destruction on him.

On the last day. And anyone who subtracts from the book. Subtraction will be made. On his own

blessing. On the last day. Go and read the last portion of that passage. And the man said. He is not ready to preach.

[8 : 21] On Revelation. So Revelation is a book. That some people don't want to say anything about it. But tonight. By the grace of God. We will say something about it. Chapter 14.

Verse 1. Gave us an understanding. Of a change of environment. Situation. And a scene. In chapter 13.

John was talking about. The beast that came out of the sea. The beast that came out of the earth.

And the mark of the beast. On the forehead of people.

Or on the right hands of people. So he was talking about evil. Evil. Evil. In chapter 13. And thank God. He was now lifted up.

Into another. Fresh. Version of a vision. And he opened up in chapter 14. And he said. Behold. And I look. And when he looked.

[9 : 20] We are told. In chapter 14. He saw the lamb. Good news. Isn't it? Good news. In the sense that. Look at verse 14. Look at the. Chapter 13.

Look at the contrast. In chapter 13. Everything was evil. Everything was going down. Discouraged.

No hope. Everything. About to be given up. And then.

God said. No. There is still hope. And then chapter 14. Came up. And that's the first message. I want to put before us. That we are living in a world.

That is full of. Problems. Difficulties. Pains. And all sorts of evil things. Like maybe chapter 13. Pains. And maybe people will be saying. Why me? Why should it be me? Why should it come on my way? Why am I suffering this way? Why am I passing through these pains? Why am I losing everything I'm losing? Why is it that the business is not moving?

[10:16] Why is it that everything is dulled? Everything is like chapter 14. As if the beast is in control. But God said.

No. There is still hope. And when John looked. We are told. He looked. And then he saw. The lamb. And the lamb standing.

On Mount Zion. What a good news. That the lamb was standing. On Mount Zion. That was what John saw. And brothers and sisters tonight. The simple truth is that.

When God opened the eyes of dawn. Dawn looked at a specific place. Because when he looked at a specific place.

He was able to see. What he saw. He saw the lamb. And he saw the lamb vividly standing. On the mountain. You know.

[11:17] We are living in a world. As I said. It is full of problems and temptation. And the temptation is that. We might be tempted. To begin to look for solutions. To certain problems in our lives.

But the issue is that. If you don't look for solution. To that problem. From the right place. There is a likelihood. That you may not find solution.

To that problem. Some of us have gone. To certain places. Searching for help. Where there is no help. Some of us have gone. Into depending upon certain things.

Trying to find solution. In things that are without solution. Some of us have gone to. The extent of living. In places that. Are of no help.

Trying to find solution. To what we are passing through. It is only when you find solution. From the right place. You will get the right solution. And we are told that.

[12:15] When he looked. He saw. The lamb. On my Zion. Look at the contrast. Brothers and sisters. The beast. If you look at it.

In chapter 13. The beast was standing. On a sand. But. The lamb. Standing. On mount Zion. Can you see the difference?

That. The beast of course. That must pass away. And the one day. The beast will pass away. Is always on the sand. And is standing on the sand. And that is another teaching to us.

That whatever is built on the sand. That thing. Will never last. It may last. For the period of time. That is appointed to it.

But it will never last. Into eternity. And I think. It is a warning to us believers. So that we begin to know. It is a warning to us Christians. That whatever you depend upon.

[13:11] In this world. Outside Jesus Christ. That thing will be like. Something that is placed on the sand. And the sand will sink one day. The sand will go off one day.

But only on mount Zion. There will be solution. And remember when Jesus told. The two stories about. The two men who build their houses.

One build a house in the sand. The other one build a house in the stone. And there was a wave. There was rushing of water. There was flood. And everything came upon the two houses.

But the one that built in the sand. Went down. And the one that was built on the rock. Stood because it was built on the rock. John said he saw the lamb. On the mountain.

And right there with the lamb. He saw a figgle. A number. A hundred and forty four thousand. People.

[14:12] And some. People have. I mean some groups. Have used this very figgle. To begin to put some ideas. Into people's heads. Typical of those who are using this figgle.

Are the Jehovah Witnesses. Jehovah Witnesses believe that. These a hundred and forty four thousand. Are the number of Jehovah Witnesses. Who will be with the Lord on the last day.

All over the world. And that is not true. That is not true. John saw a hundred and forty four thousand. Two things. About this a hundred and forty four thousand.

The first thing is that. This a hundred and forty four thousand. Is a complete number. Is a complete number.

So it is talking about. Complete. Talking about. Perfect. Talking about. Those that are really. Complete. And the.

[15:12] One hundred and forty four thousand. Is talking about. The universal. Church of Christ Jesus. The whole. Church of Christ Jesus. So it is talking about.

The complete. Church of Christ Jesus. Which is going to be. Raptured. On the last day. He is talking about. The believers. All over the world. Of the church. Of Christ.

Who are going to be. Raptured. On the last day. But look at. One thing about this. One hundred and forty four. Which I so much. Also like. He said that. The lamb.

Was there. With them. So great. Isn't it? So wonderful. The lamb. The lamb. Was there. With them. What a good news.

That the Lord Jesus Christ. Is constantly. Standing by. A believer. Yes. Even if the whole world. Will turn upside down. The truth is. That Jesus.

[16:06] Is there. To see you through. Yes. There might be days. Wherever you will pass. Through pains. There might be days. Wherever you will pass. Through difficulties. There might be days.

Whereby you will pass through. Things that you cannot explain. Things that you cannot even say. Why they are happening. But the good news. Is that. Jesus.

Will always be there. The lamb. Was there with the forty four. I mean. One thousand. One hundred and forty four thousand. But another thing also. The contrast.

You see. In the. In chapter 13. There were people. Who received the mark. Of the beast. On their forehead. Or on their hands. But you look at.

In verse. In chapter 14. We are told. That the number. A hundred and forty four thousand. They had the name. Of the living God.

[16:59] And the name. Of the lamb. Written. On their forehead. Hallelujah. It's a great thing. Brothers. To know that. You carry the seal.

Of God. Upon you. As a believer. You are not an ordinary person. You are not just. An ordinary person. That the devil can kick you. Anywhere. Anytime. No. You carry the mark.

The seal. The name of the almighty. The omnipotent. The possible God. The one who is possible. In everything. You carry his name.

On your forehead. You carry the name. Of the lamb. That redeems you. On your forehead. It's a good news. And that is typical.

Of one of the things. I want to explain. Tonight again. If you look at verse 13. And chapter 14. And chapter 14. There is no. No room. For a neutral ground.

[17:52] So simple. You either carry the mark. Of the beast. On your forehead. Or on your hand. Or you carry the mark. Of God. The father.

And the lamb. On your forehead. The name of God. The father. And the lamb. On your forehead. No room for neutral. You cannot be a Christian. On Sunday. And throughout. Monday to Saturday. You are another thing else. No. We must be Christians. From Sunday. To Sunday. We must be Christians. In schools. We must be Christians.

In every places we go. You either carry the mark. Of the beast. And you go about. With the mark of the beast. Or you carry the mark.

The name. Of the father. And the name. Of the lamb. So great. So good. Where were they standing? Good news.

[18:45] They were standing on Mount Zion. And if you look at Joel chapter 2. I think yeah. Verse 32. It talks about Mount Zion. As the place of deliverance. That is the idea.

The understanding of Mount Zion. So they were standing on Mount Zion. A place of deliverance. A place where there is solution. To all problems. A place where there is.

The answer. To all questions. And they were standing there. But look at what. We must understand also. From that passage. Is the fact that. They were standing there.

Not like those who are going to triumph. Not like those who are about to win. Not like those who are about to succeed. No. They are standing there as triumphant. Those who have won.

Those who have defeated the beast. Those who have succeeded already. Not like those who are about to succeed. No. They are standing there. Triumphant.

[19:45] Anyone who is in Christ Jesus. That person. Is a winner. No one does. The Lord. They are more than conquerors. We are not conquerors.

We are more. Than conquerors. and the story went on to also tell us that the lamb was right there also so who give us the victory who made the 144,000 triumphant the lamb made them triumphant as we move on we look at verse 2 and John said in verse 2 he said and I heard a sound from heaven like a row of rushing waters three similes or metaphors John used here the first one he said the rushing waters that is to say they are like the voice of Christ and when we hear anything water most of the time Jesus identifies himself with the water he met the woman by the well the Samaritan woman and she was saying to him where do you think you can get water to give to me and he went on and on and the story ended he said to her

I am the living water I have water to give to you so John said that he had a sound like the rushing of waters like the voice of Jesus Christ he did not stop there he said that the sound was so loud like pearl of thunder and like harpist playing their harps free things very loud and full of melodies great and maybe these voices that John heard might be the voices of the 144,000 which I want to believe they are because we are going to explain it later but look at these three things he said that the voice John was carried away by this voice so wonderful so great so loud and full of melody and brothers and sisters one obvious thing that I want to also bring out from this is that the sound that comes from heaven that John heard is a sound that is full of assurance because he said the sound is like rushing water like the voice of Jesus Christ full of assurance

I have never seen anyone who hold on to the Lord Jesus Christ and even if you are disappointed in this world even if you are defeated in this world you still hold on to the Lord Jesus Christ you will not be disappointed in heaven you will never be defeated in heaven that one I know for sure I have never seen anyone who desire to hear from God and God will say look I have no time to say anything to you no anyone that desire to hear from God God will speak to him that is why he made the open invitation he said come unto me all you are heaven-lodent and I will give you rest he is a constant and constant God who is waiting to help and to help and John went on to say also that the voice were full of melodies hallelujah it's a great thing brothers and sisters it doesn't matter

I want to say the truth and as the truth no matter how good the things of this world are no matter how good Australia America or any part of this world is no matter how good anything in this world is it cannot be compared with anything that will come from God himself no that which comes from God is the best and John went on to say it he said there that these three things so great to the extent that he was carried away with them verse 3 as we move on he said and they sang a new song and before the throne before the living creatures and the elders no one could learn this song only the 144,000 about three things John mentioned there the first thing is that before the throne they were singing before the throne to depict the sovereignty of God he just finished telling us how powerful the mouth of the beast was how powerful the mouth

[25 : 01] I mean the the words that came out of the beast was and he now moved us to another place and he said before the throne the sovereignty of the living God no matter how powerful the power the power is in this world no matter how powerful the beast might think he is the living God whom we serve is more powerful than any other thing God is more powerful than any other thing and John said it there and he said he went on he said only the 144,000 were able to sing that song he heard no wonder they should be able to anybody outside the 144,000 according to what John put here would definitely would be unable to sing and what is this saying to us what is the meaning of that the meaning of that is that of course it is only the redeemed of the living God will sing on the last day in the presence of God it is only those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb it is only those who have confessed Jesus as their Lord and their Savior they will be able to stay and sing at the throne of mercy at the throne of the sovereign God on the last day

I am sorry to say it but that is the truth you either be a child of God or you are not at all you either be a believer or you are not at all there is no room for good works there is no room for anything else apart from the Lamb and the blood of the Lamb no room for pretenders and the Bible John said to us that these are the only people who are able to sing what am I saying and what is John saying to us there are some things that God might bring it out but only to some specific people it is natural for the rain to fall on everybody it is natural for the sun to shine on everybody it is natural for the wind to blow on everybody but there are some things that God will only reserve it for those who are his and his alone as we move quickly verse 4 talks about three things also and he said in verse 4 the long story short because if we look at verse 4 it could be look at the literal part of it but it is more than the literal part of it he said that there were those who did not defile themselves with women hmm and this one posed some question what is the issue of not defiling themselves with women because if

we accept it literally like that the way it is put that means that 144,000 were all men so there will be no women in heaven no there will be women in heaven so it is more than that it is not literally that way of course there is a possibility that one could defile himself with women a married man going into adultery you are defiling yourself with women a married woman going into adultery you are defiling yourself even single ladies going into marriage into sex that is not accepted in the bible you are defiling yourself but the defiling of self that John referred to it here is about those who have kept away even though they are in the world even though they are living in this world but they do not allow the things of the world to control their lives they do not go into intimate relationship with the things of the world yes, money is good we can look for money but money should not control our lives education is good we can go for it but education should not control our lives food is good for the stomach we can go for it but food should not control our lives Fashion is good for us to look beautiful. But things like that should not control our lives. And that is what John is saying here. That these were people who do not defile themselves. They were living in a pagan world.

Now I understand better what Jesus Christ said when he was praying for his disciples. He said, Father, I know they are still in this world. But nevertheless, they are not of this world. Keep them safe. We are in this world. But we are not of this world. The things of this world should not control us. And another thing he brought out so clear is that they were following the Lamb. [29 : 42] If we look at verse 4, they were busy following the Lamb. What a good news. What a wonderful thing for us to know. Any child of God that follows Jesus more closely, so closely, you have assurance.

All is well. And all shall be well. And the third thing he also brought out there is that he said, They were like fast fruit. Still in verse 4. False fruit.

False fruit. Meant for God. Just meant for God. In another word, that is the reason. That is the purpose. That is why you are here in this world.

Let me put it again this way so that we understand. What John is saying here is that from the crown of their head and throughout their lives, they were meant to live for God.

Just imagine that you woke up one day. You pack your dishes, dirty dishes, and you push them into the dishwasher, right? Everybody should know what dishwasher is.

[30 : 43] You now push them into the dishwasher. And you're about to sit the dishwasher, and of course you expect the dishwasher to wash. And then the dishwasher opens its mouth.

Where did it get the mouth? I don't know. Don't ask me. But the dishwasher speaks. Speaks to you. He says, look, I am tired of washing dishes.

I want to cook food like microwave. You jump out of the house and run away. But in case you don't jump out and run away, you will stay there and ask the dishwasher, what do you mean?

That thing was manufactured purposely to wash dishes. No matter what, even if it desired to be like microwave, it cannot be microwave.

And that is what I think John is saying here. That we are formed in the image of God purposely to live for God.

[31 : 50] To have communion with God. To work with God. To please God in everything. The moment you come out of that, you are doing the wrong thing. Dishwasher trying to be a microwave.

It will work. You are a dishwasher. I am a dishwasher. Man to wash dishes. That is all. And that is what John is saying here. First fruit meant for God.

The reason why you and I are living is purposely for God. Yes, we might need the things of the world to keep us moving. We might need good cars. We might need good homes. We might need every good thing.

Money, yes. To keep us living. But living for God. Outside that is contrary. And finally, as we close. Verse 5.

Look at what he said. The redeemed of the Lord. They never speak evil. Only never speak lie.

[32 : 50] Complete truthfulness is found in them. What a wonderful thing. That complete truthfulness is found in them. Could somebody just listen to Jacob talking from A to Z.

And that is true. Could somebody just listen to you when you are talking? Or when you are defending yourself? Or when you are telling people about things? Could people just say, he has told us the truth?

Jesus said, you will know the truth. And the truth will set you free. I take you back to what my wife said. Because the topic tonight is, keep your garment pure.

My wife said to me, be careful the way you put that spoon. Be careful the way you put your hand on that table. Be careful the way you put that spoon.

I still remember vividly. And I think John is saying to us, be careful the way you walk. Be careful the way you talk in school, at home, in your workplaces.

[33 : 59] Be careful the way you do things. When people are seeing you and when people are not. Be careful the way you do things. When your parents are there or they are not there. Be careful the places you go.

Be careful the things you do. Because one day, we will report before the Lord. One day, I will be asked to stand up to pray.

Will you splash the soup on your shirt. And defile your garment. Or you will keep your garment pure.

Amen.

Amen.