April 23rd, 2017

ICA Sunday Pulpit Message

**The Son of God wants a Disciple of “Only” (Mt 10:40-42)**

(Intro)

It is good to see you. Greet those around you. Have you had a good week? Today’s title is, “The Son of God wants a disciple of only”. We also looked at what Jesus did during His ministry. What kind of disciples did Jesus select? There are a lot of fables in Korea. There was a story about a son belonging to a rich family who fell in love with a daughter from a poor family. There are famous characters. They dated for a while. The guy comes to a determination to travel to the capital. He wants to take a national exam. A long time passes, and it takes a while from his to contact her. During the time, she waits. She is pretty, so she is tempted. People would event threaten her. She was interrogated as well. She never gives in. She has made up her mind for one guy. He passes the national exam and is welcomed back. They have a passionate reunion. This story was also made into a film and book. A lot of people enjoyed and watched it. There are 2 main characters, but people root for the girl more than the guy. It was her unchanging heart that people were moved by. She was able to maintain her one heart and whole heart, without betraying him. She didn’t even give in to threats nor temptations. This is the reason why we applaud those who maintain their whole heartedness. It is the exact same for God. What God wants for us is to be with Jesus. If you are able to say, “only Jesus”, then you can enjoy the disciple of only. This isn’t about being stubborn. You need to proceed with clear faith. This is the kind of disciple that Jesus is seeking. Everyone can be a disciple. God is seeking them out. He has His own standards. Each person has their own qualities. God looks at it when looking for disciples. These qualities are mentioned in today’s reading. In Matthew 10, it talks about these inner characteristics. Jesus is expressing it in extreme ways, so it may seem like strict commands. It is mentioned at the end of chapter 10. The earlier part of that chapter is about Jesus sharing what He wants.

1. As Jesus sends His 12 disciples, He emphasized what to discard
2. Worries towards materials (Mt 10:9-10)
3. Fear towards incidents (Mt 10:17-22)
4. Relying on people (Mt 32-38)

As Jesus was commissioning His 12 disciples, He emphasized what to discard. We could summarize it down to 3. In Matthew 10: 9-10, it talks about discarding your worries towards materials. Do not be concerned with physical things. This is what we are most worried about. A person who does the work of God does not need to worry about money. He also tells us to throw away these worries. In verse 17, it talks about being on your guard. You will be handed over to local councils and flogged. Even family members will abandon you and betray you. Perhaps because of your faith in Jesus, you will be hated. When these situations occur, do not worry. In verse 32-33, it talks about discarding your reliance on other people. it says that if you deny Him before God, He will deny you before His Father in Heaven. He says that it is normal for you to have harmony in the family, but because of Jesus, you might have disharmony. They might become your enemies. Jesus said that anyone who loves their mother, father or children more than Him, is not worthy of Him. What is He saying? We are so obsessed with people around us. So, we live denying God. In order to avoid confrontation, they are controlled by their family members. The 3 things that Jesus is emphasizing are problems related to money, incidents or people. It is not easy to talk about money problems. Judas Iscariot sold Jesus for money. Judas also stuck his hand in the offering basket. He was one of the 12 selected. He sold Jesus for money. It just means that there are so many people who cannot live freely for money. There is this church. During worship, the pastor gives a sermon. The church members respond with an amen. If the pastor says something, the church members repeat it. The pastor said that the church members don’t have faith. They repeated it. He said that they needed to go and run. We need to go to the ends of the earth. He said that they needed to fly. He was filled at the moment. He said that in order to fly, he needs offering. Then, the church member got silent. It means that our weakness is money. Jesus is telling us to not worry about money. That is what He is sharing with His disciples. The disciples also had envy towards one another. Although, they were co-workers, they were jealous of one another and defensive. Peter denied Jesus 3 times on the day He was arrested. He didn’t stop there. He even cursed Jesus. It means that before people, he completely threw away his faith. He was fearful. Also, Jesus was their teacher and crucified. If it happened to Koreans, we would band around and try to rebel. However, all the disciples ran away. We often give up before problems. They followed after Jesus for 3 years. They witnessed miracles. They also received power from Jesus and spoke in tongue. Even these kinds of disciples fell apart. This is what the 12 disciples were like. In some ways, this is our appearance in the modern times. It means that if we live our walk of faith, we need to transcend our stumbling blocks. It is the same for all of us. It doesn’t mean that you need to be disappointed with yourself and discouraged. We need to understand the reason behind this. You need to understand that if there is a problem, there is an answer before Jesus. What was the original man like? How were Adam and Eve like? Everything was abundant. The Garden of Eden was the symbol of abundance. It belonged to him. Poverty did not exist. Everything was over-flowing. That is the original blessing given to mankind. What was the relationship like between Adam and Eve? He confessed that she was from his flesh. What about Eve? She said that she was his supporting spouse. That was original mankind. They had such passion. They were described as one body. How did original mankind react to problems? They had authority from God. They watched over the Garden and managed it. To increase in numbers and reproduce was their main job. They had the power to facilitate. These were in possession of original man. Adam received the answer to control all things abundantly. It would’ve been great if these tremendous blessings were given down. Unfortunately, we had the issue of Genesis 3:15. The devil tempted them. They fell into temptation. He left the word of God and lost all blessings. We became the servant of the devil. He became a servant of Satan. What is in Satan’s heart? Satan committed sin before God. He was chased out of heaven. He probably had a troubled heart. When the time of the Lord comes, he will be eternally locked in hell. His heart is probably filled with worries and fear. So, he acts out. If you are his servant, you are also filled with worry, anxiety and fear. After that incident, the abundance of the Garden changed to desolateness. Their relationship changed. They began fighting a lot. They are blaming each other. You are acting like a servant of the devil. After that, Adam could only feed himself after hard labor. They were preoccupied with making a living. We are the descendants born beneath Adam. All of mankind is born like this. We are seized by this. No one can be free from this. All people are underneath this. It is not a single person’s responsibility. All of mankind struggles. Wars will always break out. Even the wealthiest people try to build their wealth off others. Water was once an unlimited source. Now our water is contaminated and people profit off of selling water. We have genetically altered fruits and people make profit off it. Families are trying to make a living for themselves, but big corporations take over. People don’t know the spiritual background, so they blame the wealthy. It is not within our own power. We are stuck in this cycle. You should research more. Go into the details. People who make a living without God, crumble without God. it means that without Him, we are seized by problems. This was the event of Genesis 3:15, original sin. From this point on, people have a heart against God. Our hearts are diseased. This is all the works of Satan, who fed them the fruit. Mankind committed the sin. The responsibility relies on us. The start of this was Satan. God did not go to Adam and tell him to fix this problem. He said that He would send the one to shatter the head, the offspring of woman. He will solve the problem of Satan. He will unravel the curse of Satan. Who is that? It is Jesus Christ. Jesus came in the body of a man. He threw away the glory of the throne to come here. He is God, but He took Himself down to our level. He is Jesus Christ. It is an amazing that the Lord came for us. The Bible only talks about Him. We need to find the love that Christ has for us. Just as Jesus loved you, that is how you must love one another. It is not necessarily about love. We need to focus on what He did. Jesus came as a Son of God, and never disobeyed the word of God. Jesus said that in Jn 4:34, “"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.” It means that if he doesn’t obey the word of God, he cannot live. Who disobeyed God the first time? Satan. If you proclaim the name of Jesus before Satan, then Satan can’t respond. Let us say that one person is a beggar before a wealthy person. How would you feel? Can you stand before this person? You will feel an oppression inside. That is why he is oppressed. It is Jesus who accomplished the works so that Satan cannot stand before Him. Jesus sacrificed Himself before His 12 disciples. However, Satan makes people sin against one another. This is Satan’s flaw. Satan doesn’t stand before Jesus. Let us say that your parents are too poor to go to college. You had to work in a factory after school. You meet someone for marriage. They went to Seoul National University. How would you feel? He would feel oppressed. Jesus fulfilled the ultimate love. Moreover, Jesus resurrected. It means that He also crumbled the power of death. Satan uses the fear of death against people. However, Jesus went above that. Satan comes to attack people with death. However, Jesus broke down that power. Mankind suffers because of physical things. Mankind struggles because of disharmony. Mankind is always oppressed by problems. Satan drives people to be like this. Jesus shattered the head of the servant. Satan is holding onto people. Jesus came to break down Satan. If we are standing on the same side of Jesus, we will be able to overcame everything. The destiny that is brought to us will be crumbled. In other words, the original blessing of mankind will also be given to us. You might say that you have nothing to eat. It is already given to us. That’s why Jesus constantly requests faith. The blessings of abundance, prosperity of relationship and conquest of the problems and field are inside of Jesus. So, we need to accept Him to abide with Him. This is the reason why you don’t need to be afraid of money, people and problems. Do not be oppressed. It is He who is with you. That will lead you to victory. Do not waver because of people or money, but firmly go onto that. You need to hold onto Jesus and head out. “Be bold because I have overturned this world.” He has finished this problem. Believe in Him and follow. That is faith.

1. As you see the word of Jesus inside of you, you can have the faith of “only”
2. Uniqueness of Christ (J 4:16, Acts 4:12)
3. Completeness of Christ (Rom 8:1-2, Heb 9:13-14)
4. Eternity of Christ (1John 3:8, Heb 13:8)

When you experience His work once, that will change you. We have recorded these 3 terms. We have the uniqueness, completeness and eternity of Christ. Our problems began because we left Jesus. When God is on our side, everything will be finished. There is no other way that allows us to meet God. We cannot use religion to meet God. He said that He is the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through Him. Peter said that no one else can provide salvation. He is the only way. There is only 1 person who has always been foretold and prophesized from his birth, crucifixion and resurrection. He came accordingly and fulfilled all. He promised to come again. Only 1 person said to pray in His name and He would answer. The Lord you believe is the unique God. That’s why you can have the one heart. Let us say that you have one heart for one person among others. You have to understand the uniqueness of Christ. Also, Christ is complete and perfect. His essence is of God. His love is not conditional. He poured His love for us. He gave His life for us. His power is complete. He has the power to overcome death and Satan. He displayed His complete power. He freed us from disaster and death. “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.” Because of the blood that He shed for us, He is sufficient and complete. May we be able to confess that Christ alone is sufficient. He is eternal. Satan is also eternal, but only Christ can break him. The power that He used is transferred to us. We can enjoy the blessing of eternal life and have the eternal victory. I bless that you can realize the uniqueness of Christ and become one heart. We can realize the completeness of Christ so that you can have whole-heartedness. Because you can realize the eternity of Christ so that you can have continuation. May we all confess it.

1. As you look towards the rewards in Heaven, there are things to challenge in this world with the faith of “only”
2. Make a confession of faith that God is the one who gave all materials (2Cor 9:8)
3. Find disciples, teach and raise them among all people (Mt 28:18)
4. Make all incidents are doors and platforms of blessings (rom 8:28)

What must we challenge for? We need to make a confession of faith that God is the one who gave all materials. In 1 Corinthians 9, it said “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” All grace comes from God. It also says that He will make all things abundant to complete what is good. Make the confession of faith to use money for His work and challenge. If He has given you a lot of money, use it for Him. If you plant seeds, and you will be able to reap. Only those who give can receive. God can do good through me. You will receive thousands of years of evidences. Confess His name and challenge. If you are debating on whether or not give to tithe, you have a long way to go. Everything belongs to God. Give it back to Him. What do we need to focus on? We cannot satisfy everyone. There are limitations. Don’t let that discourage you. We need to focus on 1 thing. In the same way, God has prepared people in life. These are the disciples whom God will attach. Don’t try to use people to your own advantage. You need to make them disciples. Jesus said to make disciples of all nations, then, he would be with you always, to the very end of the age. People will see that you are full of blessings and be drawn to you. People might leave you if you waver. If you hold onto the way of discipleship, then you can enjoy a classic relationship. What do we do with problems? We have the authority to subdue over all problems. Make an opportunity for blessings. In Rom 8:28, it is written, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Let us say that Joseph complained all the time. Then, he would never become the governor. He allowed himself to enter inside that problem. May you have that restoration. When these problems occur, then make that problem into a pedestal. There is an answer in every problem. Conflicts are a chance for renewal. When you rejoice in God, then it will be followed by a reward.

(Conc)

"He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me.” You will receive the exact same treatment that Jesus received. It is amazing blessing and reward. “Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward.” What does that mean? God has a reward for all situations in detail. “And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward." It means that if you have a discipleship of only, it will not be forgotten. He will give a specific reward, even for the smallest things to those who have the discipleship of “Only”. May you hold onto the covenant of only. Then, you can receive God’s rewards.

(Prayer)

Father God, may we return glory to you. Help us to live a discipleship of only. Help us to enjoy the rewards of heaven. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.