August 6th, 2017

ICA Sunday Pulpit Message

**God’s son takes his own things (Mt. 21:1-11)**

(Intro) For the land you purchased, you get the right to possess, use, and dispose.

The title of today’s message is “God’s son takes his own things.” When you purchase a land with your money, it becomes your property. You have the right of that property. You have the right to possess, use, and dispose. Even for men you have this right, what about God who has created this world? What we have in this world belongs to God. God created this world. He can use it and dispose it at the end. We read in today’s Scripture that Jesus needed the donkey that belonged to someone else and He used it. Honestly speaking, our life and all things belong to God. With that point of view, we need to look at the Scripture.

In the recordings of Hosanna, most church members listen to the words like this. People say that Jesus, king of all kings, was humble and rode on a donkey. So you need to be humble. Do not be arrogant. When pastors give a sermon like this, people respond with Amen. It is not wrong. 90% of pastors give messages like this. I’ve been preaching like that as well. Like the donkey that followed Jesus as He called it, we should follow the calling of God. I hope you follow God when He calls you. When people hear these words, they say Amen. Is it correct? It is not incorrect. However, we are reading the Book of Matthew with a different perspective, the perspective the perspective of God’s Son, Jesus Christ. Also, in Christ, we became sons of God. That is why we need to have the perspective of Christ. Like Jesus called on the donkey and used it, we as sons of God should also use the tings of the world. This is the blessing in Christ. Through the Gospel, the blessings of the Garden of Eden have been restored in us. So take those blessings. If you think you lack faith, ask for faith and use it. With that perspective, we should see today’s word. We are not the Creator God. We are creations. Through God’s grace and miracle, we were entitled as sons of God. We should boldly use that status and authority as sons of God. Because we have the best status, we can boldly live our walk of faith. You and I are the sons of God who believe in Jesus. As sons of God, we should find what we need to see, hear, and know. Jesus didn’t come as a superman. He came as a human being. We can follow Him because He came in our form. We should look at the Bible in such a way.

People of this world are affected by Satan, filled with Satan, and live like Satan. They reveal the work of Satan. We are called to be victorious over this world and to save the world. In order to do that, we need to be filled by Jesus Christ. We can only break down the forces of Satan by the name of Christ. We can only be victorious when we are filled with Jesus Christ, live like Jesus Christ, and reveal the power of Christ. As sons of God, we should be set apart. Therefore, Father God promised to give the Holy Spirit. What is filling of the Holy Spirit? It is enjoying the background of the heavenly throne. It is receiving that power. It is enjoying the control tower that controls our life and death. At that time, the forces of darkness crumble down. The heavenly angels are sent to us. This is how we become victorious. It is a unique and special blessing of God. No other creation has received this blessing. It is the blessing that this world cannot know or give. Because of this power, God allows us to go to the places that no one can go. We meet people that not many people can meet. For instance, Joseph’s brothers could not meet the Pharaoh. However, Joseph met the Pharaoh and saved him. With the power, he solved the problem that no one could solve. If you are in the midst of great hardship, realize that God gave you the problem so that you can experience this power. Rather than focusing on solving the problem, be thankful and glad for the blessing that God has prepared.

1. God's son, Jesus Christ, took His own things.

(1) He entered into God's city, Jerusalem, as the king. (Mt.21:1-11)

(2) He cleansed God's temple, the temple of Jerusalem. (Mt.21:12-17)

(3) He judged that God's creation, the fig tree did not have fruit. (Mt.21:18-22)

Matthew 21 records a few events. On Saturday I sent out a Kakao talk message for you to meditate. In Matthew 21, there are many incidents including the incident of Hosanna, cleansing the temple, and cursing the fig tree. What is the meaning behind these events? It is when Jesus was about to enter into Jerusalem with His disciples. He rode on the donkey that belongs to someone else and entered into Jerusalem. Many people hailed Jesus Christ saying, “Hosanna!” This is the even of Hosanna. Next, there was an event of cleansing the temple. Jesus entered into the temple in Jerusalem. He drove out the salesmen in the temple. This is the second incident in Matthew 21. And then the third incident occurred the next day. Jesus was hungry and He went to eat the fruit from the fig tree. However, the fig tree did not have any fruit. If we were in that situation, we would probably look for other trees, but instead Jesus cursed the fig tree. The next day, the fig tree was dried up. Today, let’s look at these three events. With the worldly perspective, these events are quite strange. Right after Jesus entered into Jerusalem, what happened? Did He get crucified or elected as a president? He was crucified. The people who shouted out “Hosanna” changed and tried to kill Jesus. Do you think Jesus knew of this? Because He already knew, He told His disciples multiple times. He said He will be persecuted and die by the priests and the Pharisees. Crucifixion is a shameful event. During the weekdays, I usually wear shorts and simple t-shirt. I get embarrassed seeing Elder Victor coming to the church to clean because of my attire. How shameful would it be if I were naked instead? Jesus was in that situation. Don’t you get mad when people younger than you don’t greet you or someone curses you? Jesus was beaten up by His creation and shed blood. And it wasn’t His fault. He didn’t commit any sin. Did He have to show that He is the King before He was crucified? He didn’t even ride on a carriage. He rode on a donkey. He didn’t walk on red carpet. He walked on the clothes of the crowd. He was hailed by the people who would soon turn into enemies. Isn’t this a little strange? Jesus knew that He would die but He went to Jerusalem as King. The Hosanna event is quite strange.

The event of cleansing the temple is also strange. The temple is for people to worship and pray. There, Jesus couldn’t control His temper and was enraged. Wouldn’t it be cool if He said, “You know your sin.” Instead, He kicked out the animals and the people. Why did He act this way? It would have been more persuasive if He calmly taught the crowd. Let’s say that I was enraged upon my family during the Sunday service. Wouldn’t you think it is quite embarrassing? With worldly perspective, it is strange to see the servant who relays God’s word not being able to control his temper.

The event of the fig tree is also strange. Seeing the fruitless fig tree, Jesus could teach His disciples that one should bear the fruit of faith. However, Jesus cursed the tree to wither and die. Same event is recorded in Mark 11. In summer, we get watermelons and grapes. In fall, we harvest rice. In the Bible, it is written it wasn’t the season for fig. It is rightful that there is no fig on the tree. He could have said “it is not the time for fig tree to produce fruit; I didn’t know well,” but Jesus cursed. Why did Jesus have to curse the fig tree to wither? However, today we should find the reason why Jesus acted that way.

2. God's sons, the Christians, must take their own things.

(1) The true master of the field that they live is Jesus Christ. (2Chr.7:4)

(2) They must raise their church that they serve as a temple where everyone pray. (Act.13:1-3)

(3) Christians, the creations that restored the image of God, must bear the fruit of faith. (Jn.15:5-8)

Where did Jesus go? He went to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is God’s city. The owner of the city is Jesus Christ. Rightfully, Jesus went into Jerusalem as a King and a master. In today’s passage, it says, “It is to fulfill the Word in which the prophet has spoke.” The Word of Zacharias 9:9 was fulfilled. Because He is the Lord, He went as a King to fulfill the prophecy. To be honest, all 237 nations around the world is God’s property. That is why the Lord proclaimed to the ends of the world to every tribe and nation. Especially the field where we are, Jesus is the master and the King. God wants to rule over Austin, Kileen, and San Antonio as a King. When Jesus becomes the King of the city you live in, the city will revive. God wants to fix the city you live in. 2 Chronicles 7:14 says, “if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” When we pray, we focus on my children, my family, and my church. It is important, but we should think deeply and seek new grace. The city you live in is God’s. God will bless those of you who confess and pray that their field is God’s. Austin, Kileen, and San Antonio are God’s. It is not the governor or President Trump who is the king, but Christ is the King. Pray that your region will receive the answers of world evangelization. God will listen to your prayer. He will give you the answers to change the region. If you live in Nolanville, confess that Nolanville is Jesus Christ’s. Please rule over this region as the King. God will bless your region.

The second event is the cleansing of the temple. The temple of Jerusalem is God’s temple. In today’s passage, Jesus proclaims, “This house is My house.” The same event is recorded in Mark 11. “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. But you have made it a den of thieves.” Jesus was mad because the temple is God’s. However, the temple was turned into the place of sales instead of the place for worship and prayer. Jesus said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer.” In order to avoid God’s wrath, how should our church needs to be guided? I believe that God wants our church to be the church where people from 237 nations can come to worship and pray. You probably know that I am a particular person, but I cannot do anything in front of Mr. Kevin or Elder Victor. It is not because they are great or that they give a lot of offering. It is because they are of multi-cultural ethnics. This doesn’t mean that we should be always nice to foreigners. You should be able to see that God sees these people preciously. God wants Mr. Kevin to evangelize the white community. God wants Elder Victor to evangelize the Hispanic American community. You should believe and pray for Mr. Kevin and Elder Victor that they will be the evangelists for the white Americans and Hispanic Americans. They will please God. Through Mr. Bass, many African Americans should come. Many Japanese and Chinese people should come too. This means God is blessing our church. If you look in the Book of Acts, there are many great churches that disappear and there are also small churches that are greatly used by God. For example, the church of Jerusalem did not want the Gentiles to eat and worship with them. Then, the church quietly disappeared meaning that there are no more recordings of this church in Acts. However, the scattered people gathered at the church of Antioch where God sent Paul. God sent the Romans 16 people to that church. God opened the doors of evangelism and missions. In Acts 13, you see 5 leaders of the church of Antioch. The Jews, Greek, and African were all multi-ethnic group. “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” Like the Antioch church in Acts 13, I pray that the Immanuel church at Austin would become the church where people from all ethnic groups can gather and pray. God will bless those who pray that way. He will always be with you and bless you until the end. Even though we may have different language and culture, God blesses those who become united as sisters and brothers in the Gospel. Psalm 133 records, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing—Life forevermore.” God blesses those who dwell together in unity with people from other culture. That is why Jesus was enraged when the people of the church could not be united in the house of prayer. I hope you will be able to see this.

The last event we will look at is the incident of the fig tree. The fig tree is God’s creation. What’s the purpose of plants? It is to root down and grow, bloom flowers and bear fruits. It is recorded that Jesus was hungry. Jesus needed fruit, but it wasn’t there. This is why he was mad. Although it was not the right season for fig, what God wants needs to be in the right time schedule. Pray about how you could bear the fruit of God in your walk of faith. God will bless you. John 15 records, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit.” Verse 4 records, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” I hope you stay in the Gospel. When you pray together in enjoyment, God will give you fruits. Matthew 21:21-22 records, “So Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.’” When you stay in the Gospel, God will bless you with many fruits. Pray this way. “God I was only interested in solving my problems, but I want to bear fruits in what You want. May You use me to glorify You when You need.” God will bless people who pray this way. With worldly perspective, it may look strange. However, God has an absolute reason. Everything is God’s, He is the King, and He wants the fruit when He needs.

3. As we are called as witnesses of world evangelization, we have to take the things God has prepared.

(1) God has called you with His complete plan towards the field that you live. (Act.18:10)

(2) God has called you with His complete time schedule towards that church that you attend. (Act.1:12-14, 11:19-21)

(3) God has called you with His complete preparation towards your life. (Col.2:2-3)

First, God has called you with His complete plan towards the field that you live. Believe that God has put you in the place in His plan for the region. Acts 18:10 records, “for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.” This means that there are many people God has prepared in your region. Because God made you live in that place, God will help you find the people who have been prepared.

Second, God has called you with His complete time schedule towards that church that you attend. If you look at Acts 1, God called 120 people with His compete time schedule in Mark’s upper room. In Acts 11, God called the people to the church of Antioch. We sometimes wish that our church would be like this and that. However, those are incorrect words. God guides the church because it is His body. When we entrust everything in God’s schedule, God will raise it according to His plan. Sometimes a pastor is called to church. Then the pastor looks at the list of lay leaders and see how much they offer tithes and whether they provide a house or a car. Also, people see whether the church has a good system. However, this is not being guided correctly. When you follow God, He will raise you and bless you. You can apply this to a couple. If the woman considers whether the guy’s salary is high or not, it makes the guy upset. If the man considers whether the woman had plastic surgery or not, it makes the woman upset. This is not love. If you calculate how the pastor is and how the church is, you will fail. There is a perfect time schedule. Earlier, Elder Moon shared the prayer topics of our 15th church anniversary. A church that has been for a year and a church that has been for 15 years are different. God has raised this church until now.

Third, God has called you with His complete preparation towards your life. Colossians 2:2-3 records that all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom are hidden in Christ. And you can do all things within Christ who gives you strength. All the answers and blessings are within the Gospel and only Christ. Victory is only in Christ. Jesus is the Christ. When you go inside of Christ, all the problems will be solved. When you realize this, we say that your life is concluded with Christ. No one can block the person whose life is concluded with Christ. God will give you complete victory. So do not be deceived by your own thoughts, emotions, experiences, knowledge, environment, situation, and other’s words. Faith is not being deceived. God has prepared the things of God. We are God’s. Our life is not ours but God’s.

(Conc) Once you believe the highness, authority, power of Christ Jesus, God's answer, blessing, work arise. (Mt.21:23-32)

Let’s make a conclusion. There is another incident in Matthew 21:23. People ask Jesus what authority He has. Jesus answered that He doesn’t know and asked them where John the Baptist’s authority came from. John the Baptist is sent by God. John proclaimed to Jesus that He is the Son of God. How can we entrust everything to God and find things of God? When we realize Christ’s authority and highness, we can completely entrust everything to God. We should not doubt the mystery of Christ and believe in Him. God only talks about the Christ and He gives salvation only through Christ. God wants us to be like Christ. Jesus Christ is the only Son of God. Once we hold onto that Christ, we will be God’s. Then we can hear the voice of God. What kind of voice? “But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mind.’” God’s Son took God’s things. Because we are God’s, God will take responsibility of us. Confess that you are God’s. Say to people next to you, “you are God’s.” I believe that God will be with you and He will be responsible for you.

(Prayer)

Thank you, Father God, for being with us. Thank you for letting us know what we need to realize in Christ. May this land I stand on be God’s temple. I want to hail You, the King, and I want to give You my donkey. I want to lay my clothes in front of You. Bless our church to be the church where the people from all nations can gather and worship together. Help us to become united with all the multi-ethnic sisters and brothers to the point where we can dwell together in one house. We believe that we will receive the blessing that You have commanded. We want to give You our fruit at Your most needed time. We want to glorify You. We believe that You will make us victorious with God’s things in Your time schedule. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.