January 1st, 2018

ICA New Year’s Message

Challenge Toward Summit

<Intro> From the bottom to the top

God bless you. Happy New Year. There were three New Year’s messages from the headquarter. I will summarize the three messages into one. I tailored the message to fit the time schedule of our church. Today’s Scripture was about Joseph becoming the overseer of Egypt. He used to be a slave, but now he became a powerful overseer. He reached the top, the place of summit. I hope you and your future generation will have this kind of blessing. For our church, 2018 is the year of challenging toward summit.

1. The beginning of summit – resolution

There are Biblical figures who started from the bottom and rose up to the top. One of them is Joseph. He became an overseer from a slave. David became a king from a shepherd. Daniel became an overseer from a captive. What is the beginning of summit? You must come to a resolution. When you come to a resolution, the answer of summit begins. “God has called me as a slave of Egypt. How should I begin? Let me clean really well as a slave. Let me acknowledged by the owner.” This is how Joseph came to a resolution. That is why God was with Joseph. Joseph started with the heart of “only”. He challenged toward the answer of uniqueness. Later on, the work of re-creation took place. I hope you do the same. Because Joseph was committed to his challenge, he looked really nice even to tempt Potiphar’s wife. Do your best to the point you receive answers. Clean diligently until it is shiny everywhere. Take the best care of your owner’s land. When you do your task with that attitude, God will lead everything.

It was the same for David. He was the youngest of his family. He was an errand boy. He tended sheep. How would average children respond to this? They would complain about it. However, David made a resolution. “God entrusted me with tending the sheep. I will not lose any sheep.” When the beasts of the field try to attack the sheep, David protected the sheep until the end. He did it with the heart of “only”. Works of uniqueness and re-creation took place. God saw the heart of David who diligently tended the sheep. So God chose David as the king of Israel because of his diligent and sincere heart.

This was when I was in elementary school. I received an assignment. At the time, we used many slogans. The school assignment was to make a poster using the slogans. Nowadays, we can design different posters and print as much as we want, but back in the days, we sketched out the posters and painted them ourselves. It took me all night to make the poster. My father told me to do it efficiently. At that time, I didn’t know what he meant. I just tried my best. After I turned in my assignment, my teacher complimented on my work and posted the poster on the class wall. I think that was when I started to enjoy calligraphy.

It was the same for Daniel. He didn’t complain about his state as a captive. “This is a rightful situation. The Israelites left the Creator God and that is why we are captives.” As a young child, Daniel was a captive to Babylon. “Then what should I do? I should get back to my senses and only look toward God.” That was how Daniel came to a resolution. He refused to eat any food that has been used for idol worship. Daniel said, “Test your servants; compare our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king’s food.” Daniel had a heart that only looked toward God. So he received the answer of uniqueness; his appearance was better than those who ate the king’s food. This morning, I hope you will come to this resolution. “On this new year, I will begin as a summit.” It doesn’t matter what you are going through right now. When you make a resolution in front of God, the blessing of summit begins. More accurately speaking, God has prepared the answers of summit. We can uncover the answers when we come to a resolution. I hope you have this blessed time on this new year’s morning.

2. The continuation of summit - enjoyment

After you make a resolution of summit, how can you continue it? No matter what kind of situation you may be in, you should enjoy the covenant of summit. How should you enjoy it specifically? Many things can happen to you and I in 2018. When the problems come, do not be shaken. “I am a child of God. God has called me as a summit.” Confirm your status. “I will follow however God leads me.” If you still don’t know, pray about it and wait. Then, you can continue the enjoyment of summit. What problem did Joseph face? He was falsely accused and went to prison. At that time, he didn’t cry out for his innocence. He saw God’s guidance. Because Potiphar knew how Joseph was, if Joseph told him about the truth, Potiphar might have let him free. Then, Joseph wouldn’t have gone to prison and wouldn’t have Pharaoh’s officers. Meeting the officers was the platform to meet the Pharaoh of Egypt. Later, Joseph interpreted the dream of the cupbearer. However, after the cupbearer was released, he forgot about Joseph. If the cupbearer had remembered Joseph, Joseph wouldn’t have become the overseer of Egypt. God prepared that seat for Joseph. In Egypt, there was a policy where the overseer has to be over 30 years of age. If Joseph met Pharaoh before he was 30, then he couldn’t become an overseer. He would’ve simply got a compliment. Joseph was closely guided by God. Even though he came to Egypt as a slave, it was a path to promotion. Even though he was falsely accused and went to prison, he had blessings of meeting. Because of those incidents, he was able to meet the Pharaoh. An average person, when faced with the same situation, would fight for himself to get the maximum profit. People of the world like to say, “Church shouldn’t be like this. Pastors and elders shouldn’t be like this.” They are being deceived. It might sound right, but they are losing everything. Imagine Joseph. He didn’t even touch Potiphar’s wife. However, he didn’t say, “This is so unfair!” If he said that, nothing would have worked out right. Because God has called us as summit, it will be fulfilled. Enjoy this in continuation in whatever circumstances or problems.

What was David’s problem? He lived his life as a fugitive. Despite that, he confessed, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” As a shepherd, he discovered many things. As he trod the nature, he praised God who created the world. It became his time of prayer. When beasts came to attack his sheep, he threw stones and killed them. His stone throwing skill became the foundation to defeating Goliath. After defeating Goliath, many people became David’s fan, but King Saul became very jealous. However, David didn’t plan a coup thinking, “This is so unfair. Why is the king trying to kill me?” He had some chances to kill King Saul, but he didn’t kill him. Instead, he continued to run away. He even ran away as far as to his enemy’s land. An enemy found David. “Isn’t he David who killed Goliath? Catch him!” At that time, how did David react? He acted like he was a crazy person. The enemies saw David and just let him go. As he was running around, he learned geography. In the Bible, David won all the battles. When David was running away, he met many friends, friends who were loyal to David. Hence, in the midst of the problem, David was guided by God and uncovered the answers and blessings God had prepared. I hope you will be guided in this way in 2018.

How did Daniel continue to enjoy summit? In Daniel 6:10, he didn’t stop praying to God after knowing the document had been signed. He didn’t lose his faith even when he was thrown in lion’s den. That event actually gave Daniel an opportunity to proclaim that God is alive and He is with Daniel. All the people who falsely incriminated Daniel were captured and killed. Believe that God’s work will take place if we don’t forget that we have been called as God’s children and summit. When you, remnants, study, do not forget that. “I am studying for the answer of ‘only’. I am studying for the works of re-creation and answers of uniqueness.” Do your walk of faith this way. Carry out your church duties this way. Live this way. You will undoubtedly find God’s prepared answers.

3. The result of summit - fruit

When God raises you up to the top, what kind of result must you have? What kind of fruit should you bear? Fruit is to give everyone. Poor people, kind people, and everyone eat rice or crops. Both gangsters and nice people all eat apples. Fruit is for everyone. When you receive the answer of summit, you are to heal and benefit everyone.

Joseph saved all his brothers who once tried to kill him. When there was a great famine, he saved the people of Egypt and people from all over the world. David defeated Goliath and saved Israel and saved King Saul twice. He didn’t abandon King Saul’s grandson, Mephibosheth. While restoring the covenant and preparing for constructing the temple, he saved the spiritual state of all the Israelites. When old David was running away, he didn’t kill Shimei who mocked him. Daniel served three kings and saved the entire nation. Now we have seen what we have to do when God raises us as summit. Love your enemies and save them. Save your neighbors and disciples. I am thankful for God who gave us this covenant in 2018. Because you have been called as summit, you must find this.

<Conc.> Healing school, summit school

When you go through this journey of summit, God attaches you with people. He allows you to meet those who need healing. He allows you to meet those whose life has been crumbled down. Then you can heal them to restore their lives like Paul did to Onesimus. This is the healing school. You begin with 1:1, and as the ministry grows, it becomes a healing school.

Sometimes you meet elites. There are many people who are successful in every aspect but don’t know about the Gospel. You are to heal their spiritual ignorance. You are to open their eyes like Paul helped Philemon. This is the summit school. You begin by helping them 1:1 in the field, and as it grows, it becomes a summit school. Through you, I hope many people would be guided in the right path and be used by God. Tonight, record your resolution. Be grateful at the fact that God has called you as summit. Whatever you do, do it with the heart of “only”. Don’t hold others in check. With the heart of “only”, head toward the answer of uniqueness. I hope you can concentrate on this in 2018. I hope you can concentrate on Sunday worship. I hope you can concentrate on Wednesday and Friday services. I hope you can pray about businessmen’s messages and core messages according to our church’s time schedule. Focus on the prayer topics. Focus on the pulpit message. Focus on the blessing of meeting in each week. Pay attention to what you wear on Sundays. Gospel is free. It doesn’t matter whether you wear slippers to church or wear hats or chew gum. However, you must focus. What should I wear on this day? How much offering should I prepare? Who should I meet today and carry out a conversation? How should I work in church this Sunday? Church members, focus on what remnants should eat. This is not an order; it is a recommendation. On Saturdays, you might eat some good food. Make one more dish and bring to church. Then you don’t need to argue about who brings food on each week. When each of you bring one dish, there will be enough food. Young adults should bring it too. Preparing meals is not just for deacons. You might think it is burdening to some people, but when the atmosphere is set that way, people will start to bring food. “This food is for summit. This food is to share with summit.” It doesn’t need to be some kind of fancy food; you can abundantly share with the church. I hope you make a new resolution and bless you to have God’s answers.

<Prayer>

Dear God, we give You thanks. You have allowed 2018 that we’ve never gone before. Thank you for calling us as Your sons in Christ. Help us to challenge toward summit, which is the answer we are bound to receive. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray, Amen.