

February 18th, 2018

ICA Sunday Pulpit Message

### **The Resolution that Abraham Made (Genesis 13:1-11)**

<Intro> The hearts that are divided come from unbelief, while the whole heart comes from belief.

When I was in Korea, I ate a lot of Korean food. Since Korean people like Chinese food a lot, when I go to Korean/Chinese fusion restaurants, I have a dilemma: should I eat Chinese Black Noodles or Spicy Seafood Noodles? I say this as a joke to deliver a point. When you cannot choose between two decisions, it's from nonbelief. There are times when you make a decision wholeheartedly, and this is from full faith.

It is because your decision came from faith. When you lack faith, when you come to those decisions that you cannot make, you must believe.

We've never been to heaven, but we have a confirmation that we'll go to Heaven and that Heaven exists. We never witnessed that Jesus, who came as a Jew, die on the cross. We've never experienced or witnessed him walking on water or making food from two fish and five loaves. However, the words recorded in the Bible are words that we believe. We believe that his teachings will work through us as well. However, sometimes, we cannot believe these things. Then, what must we do? What must we do when we have ups and down and lack faith. In ourselves, we do not have faith. The faith that God requires only comes from God. It's recorded in the book of James.

When we ask to God, He will not rebuke us and He will not refuse us. The faith that God requires and the faith that I can require are things that He can provide. The Lord that gives us knowledge and wisdom can also give us faith.

When I looked back at myself, I wondered why I had those two hearts and could not make a decision. I thought that if I made this decision, would I be in the harm? What would happen if I fail? What if I perish or die? I asked all of these questions. Regarding those trifling questions, I was not able to answer them, and that's why I had two hearts. Both to believers and nonbelievers, this happens to all, and this is a natural thing that happens. After those questions, what decision will I make? You will make that resolution. When you dwell with God and follow God, God will give you the right to the solution. It's true. God is always watching over us. Not only does he allow those problems, but he reigns and controls those problems. This being is our Father. Whatever result I have, it's unique. For God, it's for His glory. All you have to do is confirm, and because we don't have that confirmation, we have two dividing hearts. If it is a loss, then I will receive that loss. If it's a failure, then I will fail. If

I perish, I will perish. If I die, I will die. Just like Esther confessed, "If I perish, then I shall perish." It's the same for Daniel and his three friends.

With that attitude, he made that confession. Even if I go to Hell, God will go with me. Even if I perish, the result that God make will be good. Our good Father God, our righteous Father God, that's why we make this confession. I have to make that confirmation that states that I will go. That's the faith that God will be happy with. Even if you fall into problems and conflicts, if God overturns it, then He'll make it good. However, we don't want to be in loss and harm. What about Joseph? What if Joseph was not sold as a slave? What if he wasn't framed and went to jail? Then he would not have gotten the opportunity to meet the king and rise to his status as a governor. When he was running away, he had friends that were great advisors. He was very popular in the kingdom.

There's a saying that there are good times and bad times. When David was a king, there was a riot where his son went up against him. Some people blamed David for bringing up his son wrong. They would wonder what David did so that he would have to face those problems. He had to give up his reign to Solomon. What would happen? The fake friends that David had would stick with David when David's king, but they would turn against him under Solomon's rule.

The true servants that followed David when he was a runaway were loyal to him. Those who followed David for his fame went to his son Absalom. David never tested their loyalty. When his son died, the riots decreased. Those who went to the son showed their loyalty. Everything was cleaned out and those loyal servants went to king Solomon. Apostle Paul was framed and put into prison. What would have happened if he never went to prison? If he was not able to save the prison guard and his family, then he would not have been able to set up the ministry of Philemon. There's no story that went completely well from start to finish in the Bible; it's amazing. It shows that these problems are opportunities, platforms for blessings. That's why you must boldly be inside the answer that God has given you. When you go into this resolution, then you will be rewarded. The Father of Faith, Abraham, was not able to do this in the beginning. Because of that, he was able to face many problems.

1. God had prepared the perfect blessing, and called Abraham.

1) God made him free from his old background of idolatry. (Gen. 12:1)

2) God made him to be the source of blessing. (Gen. 12:2)

3) Abraham will save all people in the future. (Gen. 12:3)

However, Abraham was not able to confirm that God had prepared the perfect blessing for him. God told him to come out of the hometown. What does that mean? He was telling him to come out of the land where idol worship was center for all. He wanted to free Abraham from the path of idolatry that cursed that town from the past. However, Abraham was not able to understand that. He did not realize that God was trying to free him from the past problems. Not only did God want Abraham to receive blessings, but He wanted Abraham to be the source of blessings. However, Abraham did not realize this. He was not able to confirm the blessings in the future that God had prepared for him. "In the future, I will save all those through you, and your future descendant, Jesus, will come from you. He will carry the burden of the cross, and for those who will hold onto that covenant will receive eternal blessings." In one word, God was telling him to let go of this past and receive these blessings. Abraham was a mere servant of God, so he wondered how he could do this for God. Because of this disbelief, he lost his brother and father.

2. Abraham struggled because of his partial obedience.

1) He stayed in the land of Haran. (Gen. 11:31-32)

2) He moved to the land of Egypt. (Gen. 12:10-15)

3) He took Lot with him. (Gen. 13:1-7)

Because of Abraham's momentary obedience, he fell into problems. He obeyed the word of God of coming out of his hometown, but he stayed in the land of Haran rather than continuing to the land of Canaan. At that time, his brother died and his father passed away. In the land of Canaan, there was a famine. Within this desperation, Abraham should have prayed to God, but he, instead, went to Egypt to find rice so that he would not starve to death. At that time, he had to suffer the shame of losing his wife. Because God loved Abraham, He gave him the opportunity to find his wife again. God said to come out of the hometown and leave the previous generation behind, yet Abraham brought out Lot. Abraham had no sons of his own, so he relied on his nephew and gave him errands to run. Abraham should have obeyed God completely, but he only followed his orders partially, and that is why he faced such problems. That is why he had a split decision.

At that moment, Abraham made the decision to obey God 100%. He decided to follow the word of God. That is why Abraham called Lot and told him to decide the land that he would go. When they separated ways, Abraham gave Lot the decision to choose first and wherever Lot chose, Abraham would go the other way. At this time, Abraham believed that God would lead him. Lot decided to go to the land of Sodom and Gomorrah where there were many things and riches.

3. After Abraham had complete obedience, God gave him the covenant of blessing.

1) I will give all the lands that you see to you and your descendants. (Gen. 13:14-15)

2) I will make you prosperous as the dust of the earth. (Gen. 13:16)

3) I will give you the land wherever you walk with your feet on. (Gen. 13:17)

Abraham did not say that he was the one who should go to Sodom and Gomorrah. Looking at material things, Abraham was the one that was at a loss. However, after making the decision of going to the barren land, he realized this. Because of his nephew, he was able to have the losses that God spoke to him about. God said to Abraham, "Open your eyes and look. The land that you see, I shall give to you." The "lot" is an inheritance from God. "The land that you see, I will give it to you." This is the covenant that God gave to Abraham. When Abraham had that conversation of faith, God gave him his faith. He promised Abraham that his descendants would prosper in this land. There's nothing greater than having successful children.

What is the reason that we came to America as immigrants? You came to America so that you can educate your children. You make success on your own, but if your children were corrupted, how would you feel? God promised that he would bless the descendants. You might say that you don't have children. However, you must raise your own spiritual children. I know my children are not going to always stay with me, but my spiritual children will always be with me. For my biological children, I will not give them anything. What I'm saying is that, even if they are my biological children, I will not give them anything if they are not my spiritual children. It doesn't matter if you're related by blood. Whatever the result that God prepared for Abraham, God has blessed him. God told him to walk with his feet, and He said that wherever his foot set down, the land was his. God, who has everything, will give us everything. Not only to the point where you can drink and eat but to the point that you can bless other people. Abraham became a wealthy person who can save. He was also a man with a lot of possessions.

When you make the resolution and make the confirmation that God gave you, then the answers that God gave you will come to you. Will that happen? That will, of course, happen. You can see the blessings that Abraham received.

<Conc.> For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Romans 11:29)

It's time for us to make the confirmations. The confirmation that God is my Father, He is on my side, and He has called

me. The calling from God is not filled with even an ounce of regret. God will guide us to the blessing of confirmation. (Romans 8) Then why do we have two hearts? You will have that heart if you don't have this confirmation and resolution.

For seven years in the past, I did short-term missionaries and went to meet with tribes. After the mission, we would come back and have a team member meeting. The leader from Team A said that they would give up his position as a banker. The leader from Team B—my teacher—said that he would come out of his job as a government worker to work full-time in a mission. At that time, without even thinking, I started crying and said that I had two children to care for. I told them that I didn't have faith. However, because He had called me, I had no chance but to follow Him. Now, I stand in front of you.

After my freshman year of finishing, it was my sophomore year orientation. The time of my freshman year, I could not understand the hardships that I faced. All of my support was cut off as well. It came to my mind the thoughts of whether I made a good decision to come to America. During the orientation of sophomore year, I had a bold thought. Even if I face embarrassment because of my lack of English-speaking skills, I spoke up. I think that was faith that God allowed me to have. Even if I feel embarrassment, I will accept it. Even if I fail my classes, I will accept that. Without me even realizing, I had these thoughts and that confirmation. I realized that the things I see will become mine. At that time, I met a Korean-American. He allowed me to borrow all of his notes. Because I was able to read and memorize, I was able to take the examinations. I was able to finish my time in school. For me who was teaching the word of God, that was a new thing for me. It was the faith that God allowed me to have. It was a heart that was filled with something, and until now, God has guided me. I bless that you will hold this faith that God allows you to have.

<Prayer>

Almighty Father God, we give you thanks. May You discard all of our disbeliefs. We need Your faith. Help us enter inside Your plan regardless of our losses. Let us have assurance and confirmation of Your faith. The blessings that You have prepared for us will be fulfilled. Help the church members crumble down the forces of the darkness. The curse and disasters will be freed from us. I pray that You will allow us to enjoy prosperity. I give thanks in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.