

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018

ICA Sunday Pulpit Message

## “Pay or Present?” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

<Intro> Give and take. You reap what you sow. (Gal. 6:7, Mt. 7:12)

Last week, we looked at the message of whether we were servants or sons. Servants and sons are completely different. For a servant, after he does his work, he will be paid a wage. However, for a son, regardless of what the son does, he will receive a present. Today, the title is “Pay or Present.” We don’t use the term “pay,” or “wage,” often in our life. When people work, they get paid. In the world, when you give something, you will take something. There is a Bible verse that states that you will reap what you sow. It’s the same meaning as taking what you’ve given. Matthew 7:12 records, “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” People in the world say that these words are the “Golden Rule,” which means that you should treat people how you want to be treated. People are so adjusted to this “Golden Rule.” However, no matter how much you work, there will be some things that you cannot gain. It doesn’t matter how much you work or try, you cannot receive salvation on your own. Why is that the case? It’s because mankind is faced with terrible problems.

1. You can truly understand mankind only through the Bible.

- (1) Original mankind (Gen. 1:26-28)
- (2) Mankind who committed sin (Gen. 3:1-6, Rom. 3:23)
- (3) Mankind who need salvation (Ac. 16:30)

Some people emphasize that the ancestors of mankind is a monkey, but there is scientific evidence nowadays that says that that is false. You can truly understand mankind only through the Bible. Mankind didn’t just happen by coincidence; God created us, and He knows us very well. Mankind was created to be with God. However, because of our enemy, Satan, because of his deceit, we were and continue to be separated from God. Because we are separated from God, we are under the control of Satan, so we have no choice but to suffer and fall into the pits of hell. It is unfathomable, but we have no choice but to go to hell the moment we die. What about the babies that are in the womb? Just like what God said, if a mother miscarries, then the baby has no other choice but to go to hell. That’s why mankind has no choice but to receive salvation.

2. Salvation is not made by mankind, but it comes to you.

- (1) The world that says salvation is not needed (Ps. 14:1)
- (2) The religions that say they can accomplish salvation. (Ac. 15:1, Gal. 3:10)
- (3) God who gave us the way of salvation as a present (Eph. 2:8)

It’ll be nice if we could receive salvation through our hard work and efforts, but that’s not what happens. Salvation is not made by mankind, but it is given to mankind by God and God alone. People of the world even say that we don’t need to receive salvation. However, they say these words because they are ignorant. What about the religious people? God gave us salvation as a present. Only God can judge, and only God can give us salvation. It’s not by our works. It’s not by our actions, so we cannot boast about it. The salvation is given by God for free. If you truly and realistically understand this, your mind and heart will change.

3. Believers can only truly live the Christian life only through the Gospel.

- (1) God who paid the enormous price (Jn. 3:16, Ac. 2:36)
- (2) Salvation that was given for free and does not need to be paid (Rom. 3:24, 5:15-17)
- (3) You cannot boast yourself, and only can be thankful to God. (1Cor. 1:29)

Instead of ourselves, Jesus died on the Cross, and though we acknowledge this, we can never truly know what that feels like. However, God has given us that salvation to us without the pain and suffering that His Son went through. The start of your walk of faith is only through the Gospel. One by one, you will realize that everything starts and goes with the Gospel, and that’s how you will live your walk of faith. The salvation is not given by wage, but it’s given as a gift. We did nothing for God, yet we have received His salvation. However, because it’s free and given to us, we tend to think that salvation is worthless. It’s understandable because you take for granted things that are readily available to us, like the air we breathe or the water we drink. God sacrificed His one and only Son for our sins. Jesus had to suffer unimaginable pain and even went to hell in our stead. When you acknowledge Jesus Christ, you will receive salvation. There’s nothing that we have to do because we have been given salvation. Romans 3:23-24 records, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” There is nothing that I can boast about. Because salvation itself is so enormous, after we receive it, we live our walk of faith. There’s nothing that we can boast, but we can boast about God.

<Conc> Only boast Christ who became your Savior. (Gal. 6:14, 1Cor. 1:31)

If there's one thing that we can boast, it's that Christ, who has saved us, is inside of us. That is the walk of faith. We are the beings who have received tremendous wages and pay without doing any work, so we should be forever thankful. It's true for us to live inside of God's grace. By His grace, we received our gift. There's a confession that I'd like to make. Before, not knowing that it was by God's grace, it was by God's gift, I have had a misunderstanding. If you could look at the screen, you can see the Ten Commandments. I asked one of the college students, "Where is the Ten Commandments recorded in the Bible?" To which, the students replied that it was recorded in the back of the Bible. However, what I was asking was the specific book, which is Exodus 20. The Ten Commandments is telling us what to do and what not to do. Before, I thought that if I did what was recorded and not do what was instructed, I could go to Heaven. The thought that I can go to Heaven by following the Ten Commandments was incorrect. Before giving the Ten Commandments, God said in Exodus 20:1-2, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." God didn't give the Ten Commandments for the people to go to Heaven; he has already given the right to go to Heaven to them. King Pharaoh represented Satan and Egypt represented the world. For those that came out Egypt meant that they have come out of the land of Satan.

Furthermore, Jesus said this in Matthew 22:37-40, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." Jesus, who was known to be from Nazareth, was about to be put into trial. When asked which of the commandments were the greatest, Jesus said that loving God as well as loving others are the greatest commandments. They are one and the same, and they were equally important. That's why all of God's laws are divided into two parts: the law of loving God and the law of loving your neighbor. That's what the Ten Commandments are. If you look at the Ten Commandments, the first four are in regards to God and the other six are in regards to your neighbors.

Matthew 5:21-22 says, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to

the hell of fire." Moreover, Matthew 5:27-28 says, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." I thought that if you committed murder, then you would go to hell. However, Jesus said that even if you belittle someone and criticize someone, that is on a par with murdering them. I thought that only putting physical wounds counted as hurting someone, but that's not the case according to Jesus. It's the same with adultery; though you may not physically commit adultery, even the simple thought of committing adultery made you guilty. This shows that Jesus knows all things, both physical and mental. If the Ten Commandments are the rules that a person who will go to Heaven must live by, then I can never go to Heaven. Matthew 5:38-45 says, "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in Heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Jesus told them not to follow the "eye for an eye" mentality. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn your other cheek for them. If someone tries to steal from you, then let them take everything. Of course, someone who slaps you or someone who steals from you is a bad person. However, if you reject them, then you are the same as that person. Jesus says that we must forgive them and help them. Is there anyone that can give everything to a bad person? If the Ten Commandments are the rules to follow in order to go to Heaven, then no one can go to Heaven. If you follow the rules of the world, then you should love your neighbor and hate your enemies. However, Jesus says that this is not the case; He tells us to love our neighbors, to do good to those that hate us. He even says that this is the way to fulfill the Commandments, rather than breaking them down.

The Fourth Commandment says to honor the Sabbath and to keep it holy. I initially thought that it would just be keeping the Lord's Day holy, however, the Sabbath starts from Friday evening to Saturday evening. When I pulled out all the verses regarding keeping the Sabbath, the list is very long and dense with information. If any of these rules were broken during the Sabbath, the general

consequence is death by various methods. I understand why the Seventh-Day Adventist Church tries to keep the Sabbath holy and be acknowledged by God. There are lots of Bible verses regarding the rules to keep the Sabbath holy, and I pulled out a couple of verses. Exodus 35 says, "Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death." It says whoever works during the Friday evening to Saturday evening will be put to death. The next verse says, "You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day." Why do you kindle fire? It is to heat the food and light the room, but the Bible says not to do that. Leviticus 19:30 says, "You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the Lord." To keep the Sabbath holy, we must reverence God's sanctuary, which means you must come to church on Friday evenings to give worship and praise. If you come to church chewing gum and wearing hats will be considered not revering God's sanctuary. Leviticus 23 says not to work on the Sabbath day and Numbers 15 records a specific incident of that. When others saw one of the Israelites gathering sticks upon the Sabbath day, they stoned him to death. 2 Chronicles 31:3 says, "He appointed the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings..." This means you must bring offerings to the person who carries out the burnt offerings. Ezekiel 45 also talks about the prince's part to give burnt offerings. At that time, they practiced theocracy. In nowadays term, it means that you must bring offerings for the pastors to carry out their ministries. If you don't abide by this, you are not keeping the Sabbath day holy. Jeremiah 10 says not to buy or sell food or any other things on the Sabbath day. Jeremiah 13 even says no burden should be brought in on the Sabbath day. Jeremiah 17:22 says, "Do not carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath or do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your fathers." If you don't abide by this, the Bible says to burn the house down with fire.

I'm not saying that you'll receive salvation if you keep the Sabbath. You're not just keeping the Sabbath by going to worship on Saturday. The Seventh Day Adventist Church says people who worship on Sundays will be cursed. However, according to the Bible, if they don't abide by all those laws previously mentioned, then they won't be saved. Who can actually fulfill all of these and receive salvation? The Second Commandment says not to make any carved image or bow down to it. It says not to make any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. So I realized that portraits of Jesus are a carved image. A wooden cross in a church is also a carved image. The Third Commandment says not

to take the name of the Lord God in vain. However, we easily name God. When I try to keep the Ten Commandments, I find myself not being able to keep any of them. Lastly, the First Commandment says not to have other gods. Of course, I only believed in God and didn't have any other gods. However, who are these gods the Bible is talking about? They are spiritual beings. 2 Corinthians 4:4 says, "In their case the god of this world as blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." It says there is a worldly god who is blocking the light of the Gospel. The worldly god is Satan the devil. So the First Commandment means not to have evil spirits before God. There are people who see evil spirits. Since those people broke the First Commandment, they need to go to hell. There are people who are possessed by evil spirits and people who have fellowship with evil spirits. In Korea, there are many fortunetellers and shamans. In most of the cases, their relationship with their spouses is broken. I wondered why and asked them. They said they have sexual relationship with evil spirits. They were possessed by the evil spirits. When I was in my teens, I experienced auditory hallucination and had nightmares. What were these? The evil spirits were attacking me physically. In the beginning of my marriage, my wife went to see fortunetellers a lot because she wanted to have a son. This means she had fellowship with fortunetellers who were possessed by evil spirits. Then my wife and I need to go to hell.

I think none of you sees or converses or has sexual relationship with evil spirits. That is having other gods. Leviticus 19:31 says, "Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the Lord your God." It says not to deal with shamans. Leviticus 20 says, "If a person turns to mediums and necromancers, whoring after them, I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people. . . A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones; their blood shall be upon them." Then, I shouldn't have gone to seminary school. I should have stoned to death. So is my wife. This is what I wanted to confess. Deuteronomy 18 says to drive them out. 2 King 21:6 says those who used fortune telling and omens and dealt with mediums and with necromancers provoked God to anger. If you break the First Commandment, you have no choice but to go to hell. If the Ten Commandments were the way to receive salvation, no one can be saved. No one can satisfy God's standard. Every single one has to go to hell. Galatians 3:10 says, "For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be everyone who does

not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” That is why God gave us the Gospel. That is why God sent Jesus Christ to this earth. That is why Jesus Christ died on the Cross to finish and complete the Law. The evidence of Him completing the Law is Christ’s resurrection. Therefore, Romans 10:4 says, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” Now it’s not about whether you keep the Law or not. It is finished. That is why we became freed sons of God that no one can condemn. Romans 8:1-2 says, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.” God didn’t merely forgive us; He freed us and finished everything for us. God doesn’t condemn me, who will? No children of God can condemn their brothers or sisters. They themselves are not keeping the Law and how can they condemn others for worshipping on Sundays? That’s why we can confess Ephesians 2:8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” We should be thankful and we should enjoy the fact that we have received this gift from God. Jesus said that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and because He’s inside of us, every day is the Sabbath. It doesn’t matter if you give worship on Sunday or Saturday or Wednesday. Colossians 2:16 says, “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.” Because of the Sabbath, nothing that we eat or drink can condemn you. The Sabbath itself is just a shadow of Jesus. Believe and understand that every day is Sabbath.

Then you might ask, “How come we have Sunday worship?” It’s because our ancestors, the Early Church members, would do so the first day after the Sabbath. They didn’t move the Sabbath. Our ancestors would gather and give worship on the first day after the Sabbath. There’s only one reason for this. When did Jesus resurrect? He resurrected the day after the Sabbath. It’s a way to celebrate Jesus’s resurrection and victory. Also, the Romans made Sunday a holiday for everyone, of course God made this happen. That’s how it became the Lord’s Day. When I went to missions, we would gather and have Bible study every Tuesday. People would ask me why I go to Tuesday worships. They would ask why I would do Tuesdays instead of Sundays; however, this just showed the level of the person, the ignorance of that person. Every day is the Lord’s Day. We praise the name of Jesus Christ, the name of the Lord. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. We evangelize the name of Jesus Christ. That’s how we will not put His name in vain. Not doing these things will be putting

Jesus’s name in vain. We do not give ancestral worship. Only through Jesus Christ can we break the binds of the darkness. It’s finished and completed with the name of Jesus Christ. For me, after realizing the Gospel, all of the misunderstandings that I had were corrected. Though I have no choice but to go to hell, through God’s grace, I was able to become a pastor and do God’s work. By the grace of His good will, I have been saved. The new answers will begin.

<Prayer>

Dear Heavenly Father, we give You thanks. You have given us Your gift as sons of God. Help us enjoy the mystery of Jesus Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.