April 22nd, 2018

ICA Sunday Pulpit Message – Remnant Intensive Training Message 1

**“Let Us Discover the True Self” (Isaiah 43:1-7) Rev. Park, Kyungmo**

Through the Scripture of today, we need to hear the important voice of God. We need to discover our true selves. For most people, they’re unaware of who they are. In Korea, there was a very famous singer who passed away a few years ago, and there was a last song that he left before he passed away. There’s a saying that your last song will be representative of your tombstone. If you look at the lyrics of the song, you can see that he talks about how he doesn’t know who he is, that no one taught him this. The lyrics are very fundamental. When you look at these significant figures, at the brink of their lives, they start to think about who they are. This is the last song he left before he passed away and it’s about how he wanted to find out about himself.

A lot of people try to get into Harvard University. During the last part of the process, when they’re interviewed, there are two things that they are asked. The first question is, “Please introduce yourself.” It’s not the easiest thing to introduce yourself to strangers. Why? Because there aren’t that many people that can concretely describe themselves. The other question that they ask is “Why should our school choose you?” That’s also not easy to respond to. The greatest ability in the world is knowing yourself—your strengths, the things that you’re good at, who you are, etc. Therefore, the greatest power that you could have is to know who you are? A lot of people actually do not know themselves. If you look at Israelites in today’s Scripture, they are in the midst of destruction and punishment. However, there’s a greater problem behind this; it’s that they don’t know who they are. They didn’t know that even though they were in the midst of destruction, God will always be with them, and God will always love them, and God will always use them to shine His glory. But the Israelites didn’t know who they were, therefore you need to know who you are in order to understand why God has called you in this age. We need to find the reasons for our identity.

I, personally, didn’t know myself. Because I didn’t, I had very low self-esteem and my confidence was non-existent. I didn’t even know what I was good at or why I must live. Even though I’ve attended church for a long time, I didn’t now myself. For most people, where do they find themselves? People try to find themselves by comparing themselves to others. They try to find themselves through the standards of the world. They try to have better educations, better houses, better cars, better jobs, etc. They use relative wealth to find themselves. However, let’s say that you don’t own as much as other people. Then that’s the trap that you fall into. This is not the way to find the true self.

The most accurate way to find your true self is to find out how God perceives you. The you that is described through the Bible is the most accurate representation of yourself. John Cabot said that if you want to know who you are, then you need to know God. The most accurate perception is how God sees you. Let’s say that you’re suffering from a cold or you have an injury on your hand; you would go to a hospital to get better. However, if you’re facing a fundamental problem in your life, that’s not something that can be fixed at a hospital. Even for a car, if you have minor problems, the car repair shops can fix that for you. However, if there’s something wrong with the engine, then you have to go back to the manufacturer. Even with watches, you need to fix a broken designer watch to the company that made it. Likewise, when we are faced with fundamental problems in life, we need to go back to God. Therefore, knowing God is knowing yourself. That’s the way to solve the fundamental problems in our lives. Because we cannot go to God ourselves, Jesus came to us in the body of a man. He completed our salvation through crucifixion and resurrection. Despite the fact, in our abilities, it was an impossible feat.

The crucifixion was difficult because God came down to earth in the body of a man. God, who is omnipotent, came to us in the body of a person, and you can see that in the Bible, He obeyed until the day of His death. On the Cross, He took care of all of our sins and curses once and for all; not only that, but He opened up the way to meet God. He had freed us from our sins and curses. He has overcome Satan who has brought upon our destruction. This is why, on the Cross, He completed our salvation. Before Jesus died on the Cross, He said that He wouldn’t like to relinquish this on anyone else. That’s why resurrection was an easy thing to do for Jesus.

Let’s say that you’re a gifted and talented person; showing those talents is very easy to do. However, God, the Creator, in the body of a man, obeyed until He died and finished our salvation. It is this Christ that resides in us. This is the reason why we need to find ourselves who are inside of Christ. Through the Cross of the resurrection, He resolved all of the problems of our lives, and He enabled us to become children of God. For those who accept and believe in Him, the Holy Spirit will abide in them. When we talk about the faith and the resurrection, we’re not just talking about the resurrection; we’re talking about how He is still with you in your heart right now. It’s enjoying every day that the Lord who resurrected is with you. That’s how, through Jesus Christ, you become a child of God. That’s why the people were able to enjoy the blessing of being with God. We are now the subjects of God’s love. Romans 5 records, Christ reconciled us with God on the Cross, and that explains the love that God has for us. If you look at Romans 8, this is post-salvation, the love that is even greater than all of us. When you look at mothers, they have their babies in their wombs for 10 months. Someone said to me that life is better before marriage. They even said that it’s better before kids. Some people said that life was better when the baby was still in the wombs, that life was better when the kids are young, when they were immobile and always lying down. They say that it was so much better when they were younger because their children made them laugh more when they were younger. As they get older and enter their teenage years, they bring more headaches and heartaches.

Likewise, pre-salvation, we need the love of God, but post-salvation, there’s a greater love that we need. In Romans 7 Paul said that the me who’ve received salvation is having difficulty to live this walk of faith. There are always these two laws that are fighting within him: the law of the world and the law of God. “I want to live through the ways of God, but it’s hard.” Although I want to follow the laws of God, I find myself following the laws of the world. After we receive salvation, we tend to fall into this mindset, too. Even after salvation, we can fall into the ways of sin. Even though we might fall because of sin, that doesn’t free us from judges and curses. We tend to think that we are being punished by God when we make mistakes, but God is not a fearful God. There’s no parent that tries to pick out the bad things of their child and punish them for those things. There’s no condemnation because we have entered the law of the spirit of life. In other words, we have become children of God.

Honestly, if your closest friend starts to make mistakes and do you wrong multiple times, you’ll start to resent them. However, there’s one being that will always forgive you. Your children are the people that you can always forgive. The reason why parents grow angry isn’t because they wish bad things upon their child; it’s because they want their children to walk the right path. For you and for myself, we are children of God. Romans 8:26-27 records, when we can’t pray for ourselves, the Spirit inside of us will pray for us instead. After salvation, He abides in us and guides us through His love. Romans 8:37-39 says that there are no problems that can separate us from the love of God. The God of trinity is the one who has saved us and is protecting us even now. Therefore, remember that you’re always a child of God. Know why you must exist on this earth. We need to truly discover the evangelisms and blessings of these. For what purpose should you study and work? If you don’t find your form of evangelism, then you can’t truly find yourself. As children of God, entering into heaven is right.

Travelling overseas, Pastor Ryu said that there are many Koreans scattered around the world, and he would ask himself why these people are staying in these places. Koreans would probably live a happier life in Korea, yet why are they here? Some people go to other places to find better opportunities, yet they live even worse conditions of life. However, those who have been prepared and planned by God, the ones who are left behind, have been placed there to discover themselves. Because people haven’t discovered this fact, they lose their identity. If you look, the forces of the darkness are the strongest here in America because America is the most blessed nation that has the qualifications to save the 237 nations of the world.

Moses didn’t know himself either. God told him to save the Israelites, but Moses denied this, questioning God who he was that he could stand in front of Pharaoh. There were about 2 million Israelites that had to come out of Egypt. In the age where the Gospel was lost, they have planted the seed of the Gospel.

Abraham didn’t know himself, and until the day he discovered himself, he suffered. For the Israelites as well, they didn’t know who they were as a nation. Until they figured this out, they would have suffered as a nation. When Jesus resurrected, He found Peter who was back to fishing. Since Peter denied Jesus three times, Jesus asked Peter three times, “Do you love me?” Jesus didn’t say anything in a rebuking manner to Peter. However, Jesus found the peter who ran away and asked Peter to do world evangelism. In Peter’s perspective, he thought that he was no longer qualified, but that was with his own standards. In God’s standards, it was completely different. In God’s perspective, the person He needed most was Peter. Why?

A well-educated person cannot solve the fundamental problems of the world. The problems of the world today can only be accurately solved by the ones who know the Gospel. At that time, Peter was the only person who had confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. He was the unique individual who could block the curses and disasters of the world. That’s why Peter was the most precious person of God, yet Peter didn’t know this. When he did realize this, that’s when he rose as a great leader of the Early Church.

You are the most important evangelical disciples that God will use to save the U.S. and the 237 nations. You are the individuals that will be prepared for evangelism. If you don’t find this, then it’s pointless for you to live in America because America is the most important field for evangelism and is also the field that Satan will attack the most. As you’re attending a church that has the Gospel, as you follow a pastor who grasps onto the Gospel, you will realize that this is a great miracle. You are a saint and believer who is the most important in Austin, TX. You need to be surprised every time you see other people’s faces at church because it’s amazing how all the people who will save Austin has met in one place each and every week. Therefore, even if you don’t have the best education, even if you think that you’re weak and lacking, you are the person who has the power to save your field. That’s how God sees you. When you discover your true self, you’ll start to realize your true answers.

I’d like to tell you about this elder at our church who funds a small university next to her restaurant. I told the elder that no matter how much you work hard at your restaurant, you’re still the owner of a small restaurant. If she doesn’t realize how she will come with world evangelism, then she will only stay as a small restaurant owner. This person is very social, and because she has many regulars, she tells her students to come to eat something when they’re tired and exhausted. That’s how she built a Bible study in the university. Beside the university, there’s a high school. If you look in Korea, if you look in high school, it’s all about college entrance exams. The third years of high schools are always in hardship. Another person would write small Scriptures of application and tell these students that they would pray for them. Every year, we have a new high school graduates that come to church saying they want to attend church. There are a lot of exchange students from China, who don’t have anywhere to go during the Korean holidays. The elder invited them to her restaurant to share food and share the Word. Now, she has a multi-ethnic worship at her restaurant. There are many Chinese students who have been connected to the church through the elder. I later told the elder that she is not just a small restaurant owner, but a spiritual leader of her region. If you don’t find your true self, your life is meaningless. We are the children of God and the evangelists who save the world. I hope that you will discover and enjoy these blessings.

<Prayer>

Father God, we thank You. Thank You for calling us as Your children. We thank You for calling us as the evangelists who will save this age. Help us so that we can discover our true selves. Guide us so that we can become witnesses who save the world. We thank You and pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.