

June 11th, 2018

ICA Sunday Pulpit Message

The 'Me' That Wins Without Fighting (Gen.26:26-31)

<Intro>

Hello. It is good to see everyone. We believe in the fact that God is our creator and the judge over all of us. Not only that, he is also your father. Our biological parents will depart from us when they get older but our father, the Lord, will never depart from us. He is responsible for us and he will protect us. He has also done something every special. For our sake, he sent us the Savior and he is Jesus Christ. Those who accept Christ as your Lord and master of your life and live like his disciples are the ones who are chosen by God. That is summarized and expressed as salvation. It is also referenced as eternal life. In other words, salvation speaks for eternal life. It is eternal blessings. Do you believe in this? By accepting Christ once, that means you will be granted this eternal blessing. Certain people say that if you commit a big enough sin that you could lose your salvation however that is not what is reported in the bible. It is up to God what punishment is allowed in your life but that doesn't mean you can never fall into hell. Salvation is not granted to you because of your good deeds or actions.

Salvation has been given to you unconditionally, one-sidedly provided to you. That is why even though you commit mistakes, you will not lose your salvation. On the other side of the token, it doesn't mean because you are so good that you can give someone salvation. The salvation we have is a one on one relationship with God. By law God proclaimed that this is an absolute gift and grace to you. Even if you do something wrong, your salvation cannot be taken away. Satan cannot steal the salvation away from you. We call this grace and gospel.

There is something that is more amazing. As a child of God not only have we been saved but all throughout your life he guides you. Until when? He guides you forever until the day you enter into heaven. God is always dwelling with you. Not only that, he is guiding us towards the answers of the summit. That is God's plan. It is the answer of the summit. Blessing of being up on the top. Even if we are unworthy and not skilled, God will bless us to be placed at the head. God, the one who is omnipotence and almighty, he is the one who set out to do this. He said that he is determined to fulfill his plans. There is nothing that we have done so well that is why sometimes we feel regrettable about God's great plan towards us. We might feel shameful in our conscience, but God has declared this as his plan and there is no one who can obstruct his plans. The reason why is because this is the intention of God. Even though I might be lacking, God has the power to change me and take me down his path. All you need to do is believe in this. Believing it so, you simply need to be guided one step at a time. Do you believe in this? It is not difficult but rather simple. The Gospel of God his

salvation is very simple, easy, and comfortable. Isn't it simple? Our church member Hwang is the mother of Diana. Let say Diana was being a good daughter yesterday but a bad daughter today does that mean that she is going to dismiss her from being her daughter? That is not how parents act. likewise, God is our parent and our father. Whether we act good or bad, he has already decided to do this. This is how this concept becomes so simple and we can quickly comprehend. So easily, this faith can enter inside of us. It is God taking responsibility of you. Is that true? That is what the summit is about. We have been looking regarding the summit. The first characteristics of becoming the summit is the fact that God will mold and carry this out. This is the reason last week we looked at the message regarding the 'me' that is created by God. How did God make us? In our life which may be hesitant and lack lustered, he has made it to an obedient life of faith. Our life that might once been a life where we run away and decline hardships, God has overturned that life that due to our calling, can challenge those hardships. How else did God recreate our lives? Our life that wants to be self-calculated according to the situations and conditions, that life has been recreated to follow his word by the filling of the Holy Spirit and his works. That is the first trait of a life that receives the answer of the summit. That is why we looked at the life of Abraham last week. Today we are going to talk about the second trait of the one who receives the answer of the summit. That is why of course we will be looking at Isaac. Is that true? Today we are going to look at the life of who? Isaac. Looking at today's scripture it talks about this experience that Isaac had. Who is Isaac? He is the son of Abraham who is the forefather of faith. However, Isaac had undesirable competitor. That competitor was the king of that region and his name was Abimelech. Today as we look at the life of Isaac, we can see the mistakes he makes. Going after his father Abraham, Isaac does the same thing and almost sold his wife. It is not the same human trafficking we see today. In order to save his own life, he lied and said that his wife as his sibling. That is why king Abimelech tried to take Rebecca as his own. That is when God intercepts and blocks this. Abimelech thought it was okay to take his wife because Isaac told him that it was his sibling. But God intercepts, and Abimelech wasn't able to do so. In Abimelech's perspective, he was lied to and because he was told something un-factual he almost sinned because of Isaac so he had a very uncomfortable heart. So, he quickly returns Issacs's wife. This kind of backdrop due to Rebecca was between Isaac and Abimelech. But as time passed, Isaac was growing wealthier. Because Isaac was growing wealthier and had a lot of servants, King Abimelech was growing anxious. That when King Abimelech tries to kick out Isaac's house hold. At that time, Isaac did not hold any riot to argue saying "I purchased this land and I have the right to live on this land." All the wells that Isaac dug out was being stolen away. Isaac has

many reasons to fight and argue back however, Isaac yielded. The more Isaac yielded, the better things turned out. He would go some place else and dig a well and find a source of water. Whenever they would farm, they would grow crops a 100 years worthy. He was able to claim this large piece of land. The bible says that he became more prominent and wealthy. That is why king Abimelech had a change in heart. Isaac had enough wealthy and man power to influence the king. That is when the king come to find Isaac himself. Because he can't go by himself, he takes his warriors with him. And that is today's scripture of Gen.26. Isaac is very surprised and asks, "why have to come to me who was very hostile to me?" Then the king says, "we saw clearly that the lord was with you. Let there be an oath between us. Let's not hate each other and not engage in war. Because you have been gratefully blessed, may you show the same blessing. Can you make this an agreement between us? Let's make an oath." This is what the King said. He also said, "Since you have been blessed by God, let there be no harm between us. What does that mean? Abimelech who used to regard Isaac as his competition, he goes to him first to have this favorable relationship. He said, "let us not fight one another but have harmony with one another." If you truly analyze this situation, Abimelech is getting down to his knee asking for his mercy. This is the answer of the summit. In Isaac's point of view, he won without fighting. That is how God molded that situation. It can't just like that either. We need to uncover why God gave us this word. He recorded it in the bible for us to share with our descendants. We know that Isaac had great faith in God but, why is that God blessed Isaac greatly so much? When you find this and hold on to the same kind of faith, God is bound to bless you. Do you believe in this? What is that Isaac possessed? How was it possible for Isaac his enemy kneel before him? There are three reasons for this. When you realize these three things and make them your own, that when you will be blessed. That is when without fight or competing, we will receive the answers and become the example. We say that living the life of an immigrant is very hard. In America, there is a language barrier and it is hard to make a living. We also say if you go to church you will meet strange people. Even the deacons tell lies and even the elders as well. But because they believe in God, they have to give some kind of worship. That is why the best trade off is going to worship as it begins and leave right before benediction so that you won't get too involved, but you did your job. That might be one way. But if you want to hold the same type of blessings as Isaac what must we do? We must not be touched by these situations. If someone tries to come up to you and lie to you, let God block that. If you have this mystery of winning without fighting that is the type of thing that will keep on happening.

1. The me that was chosen by God.

(Gen.15:3; 19:19; Eph.1:3-5, Rom.8:28)

Isaac knew that he was chosen by God. Isaac also knew that if you were selected by God, you will be victorious. How did he know that? In the same age of Abraham there was another figure. There was another figure in the same age who had great faith in God. Who was that? It was Job who was the wealthy man of his region. Whose faith was greater when you compare it to Abraham or Job? If you look at Abraham and Job they co-existed in the age. Abraham was living in the region of Chaldea Ur and Job was living in the region of the east. The original households of Abraham, they are by generation a believing family, but they lived in the land of Chaldea Ur trying to make a living off selling idols. On the other hand, Job was greatly blessed by God and became a conglomerate of the eastern region. Between those two who did God call to become the ancestor of faith? God did not call out of Job who was a man of faith but instead called out to Abraham who was struggling in his faith and making a living off selling idols. There isn't a reason to God's choice. It is God's sovereign selection. My father Abraham who lacked in faith and didn't have special skills, he was still selected and was used by God. That blessing inherited to me. That is how Isaac witnessed and experienced and learned that someone who is selected by God has no choice to be successful. Do you believe in this? Isaac also had a half-brother. Who is that? It is Ishmael. Ishmael was much older than Isaac. Of course, Ishmael was Isaac's older brother because he was born first. Ishmael was also blessed by God and was living a good life. But between those two, who did God select as the descendant of the covenant. God selected Isaac and said in genesis. If you look at this verse this is when Abraham was praying a grievous prayer because he didn't have a child. He said, "God, what are you preparing for me since I do not have a son." Then he says, "my heir will become your disciple. My servant is a faithful servant allowed to me." That is when God says, "Behold Eliezer of Damascus will not be your heir. It will be your offspring that will be your heir." He is referencing the child Abraham will have with Sarah. God repeats his promise in Gen.17. God declares and said, "no, your wife Sarah will have a child and he shall be called Isaac. I shall establish my covenant with him to be everlasting with his descendants." God showed himself to tell Abraham and Sarah this. Eventually, Isaac was born. The word regarding Isaac from God, was that given to Isaac or not? Of Course, it was shared with him. Isaac knew that God didn't select Ishmael, but God selected me. A person who is selected by God will be blessed by God. This is the fact that Isaac was aware of. There is a covenant that we must hold on. You and I, we have already been selected before creation to become children of God. A person who believes in Jesus, it means God has selected you.

Eph.1:3-5 records that he has selected us and chosen us before creation. According to his will he predetermined. He predestined us adoption through Jesus Christ. This is what Paul realized. That is why if you look in Rome, this is what it says, those who have been selected to become the sons of God, all good will come together to fulfill what is good. This is the reason why we can say this and confess this, whatever happens nothing can be a problem. Why? Because God said everything will come together in order for him to give us the best. To whom? To those who have been selected by God. Isaac realized this. What is the reason for this to be recorded in the bible? If you have truly accepted Jesus as your savior, that work itself been chosen by God. In the beginning you might think that we will just live a life of faith and end up going to heaven. But, it is not simply that. It is during our time on this earth that God will give us the answers of the summit. To believe in God and to go to church and to live a walk of faith, it means that during your life on this earth God has promised us the answer of summit. That is what Isaac caught on to. May you also catch on to this.

1. The man that held onto covenant of God.
(Gen.3:15; 25:25; Jn.3:16)

What is the second fact that Isaac knew? Isaac knew and held on to the covenant of God. He knew the fact that his father was chosen by God. When Isaac observed his father closely, he noticed that his father built an altar to the Lord and gave worship. He saw through his father during the designated time Abraham built an altar to give worship. If you look in the old testament, the form of worship at that time was blood sacrifice. They had to take the lamb and shed its blood and burn the blood. Because the lamb is being sacrificed, it is called sacrificial worship. The reason why sacrificial worship was the type of worship at the time of the old testament because it resembled the future of Jesus who will shed his blood on the cross. The savior that God will send to us, he will be sacrificed in order to save us. In our place, He will be sacrificed for us. Not only that he overcame the forces of darkness and resurrected. What does this all signify? It means that Satan, the one who is trying to trick us with the forces of death and darkness in order to control mankind. If you look at Satan, his greatest tool is death, but Jesus overcame this, and he resurrected. This is Jesus shattering the head of Satan. That is why the sacrificial worship is showing the faith that the messiah will come as the sacrifice that will overturn and bring of the head of death and Satan. He observed and followed after the faith of his father Abraham. That is why Isaac, just as his father did, built an altar and gave worship to God. That is why the covenant that is given is the savior Lord the sacrificial lamb and that is the covenant that he held on to. Do you believe in this? That is why John3:16 is a very famous verse. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. For those who believe in

him will not do what? It says that whoever believes in him shall not perish. That is why when you look at the children of God, it is impossible for them to become perished. You need to know this fact. Believe that fact that the victory of God will take place. That is what Isaac held on to. When you hold on to the word of God that is when I will become absolutely victorious. This is the reason why we come to worship. It is not just sing praise and returning home, but this is the time of receiving the word. People might question why at Immanuel Church of Austin have the 9 o'clock disciple class training and then the 9:45 departmental worship and then the main worship followed by the forum during lunch and then the third worship. It is because the word of God must be rooted inside of us. What is imprinted inside of you will show as answers. What is rooted inside of you will bear fruit in your life. What becomes apart of your nature is what will unfold as your future. To express accurately, so many years we lived our life without God. Honestly, for a long time we lived a life with no connection with the gospel. That is why we must now take root in to this because if you are unaware you will have misunderstandings. You will understand it incorrectly. If you remain that way, you will be scared easily and fall into traps. That is why church is an easy target. All you have to do is just come a give worship. Its not like you are being interviewed here. It is not some admission test. If you simply come, you are free to give worship and you can leave anytime you desire. You can also just not come. It is very comfortable but that leads to mis-understandings. That is why there is a saying in America where they relate people who goes to this church and that church to grasshoppers and ultimately calling them "church hoppers." I am not criticizing them, but I understand where they are coming from. Because the word of God is not rooted inside of them, they cannot receive grace. Through the Gospel, it is possible for us to possess everything. Because there is no enjoyment of this, even the smallest things can shock us or scar us. It means that people are simple unaware of their identity that they have been given which is you winning without fighting. After time progresses people realize. People finally realize that this problem is actually an opportunity for God to work through this problem. People finally realize that God will overturn me. That is when people instead can become happy and thankful regarding problems because people will catch on to that immediately after this problem that there is a time schedule for God to pour down blessings. Do you believe in this? Don't just listen to the covenant but hold on to the covenant. His covenant is that God will be with me until the end of earth. It is God who will bring everything together for me to overturn it to what is good. Do you believe in this? That is what Isaac held on to firmly.

2. The me that believes in the answers prepared by God.
(Gen.22:1-14; Jn.15:7; Rom.8:32)

Isaac knew that whatever the situation God had already prepared answers. Isaac had this experience that was unforgettable to him for all of his life. If you look at Genesis 22 this is the scene when takes Isaac up to the mountain and tries to kill Isaac. We know the story very well. God commands his father Abraham to sacrifice his only son who he loves. If it was for us, what would have we said? We might have said, "you gave me this son but now you are asking to give it back to you? Normally we take a lamb and give sacrifice why are you telling me to take my son instead? How can I go out evangelizing like this? How can I evangelize to other because people will say that the God I believe in is a God that kills sons? My wife will grieve. Is that how un-merciful of a God you are?" These are all the things that I would have said back to God. But what did Abraham say? Abraham did not have any reaction nor response. If you look at the scripture it says without refuting and in the early morning time he takes Isaac. This is the evidence on how great Abraham's faith was. But how was it from Isaac's perspective. It is completely out of his control and he is being taken away. He has no alternative and he has no choice to die. As we all know, it was when the sword was near the neck of Isaac that God says, "instead, take the ram that is in the bushes and sacrifice the ram instead." Abraham confesses, and this is his confession faith, "God has prepared this beforehand." That is where the word of Jehovah Jireh comes from and it means the Lord will provide. Isaac who was near his death was able to live. He was able to live because of the ram that was prepared by God. Isaac realized that at the brink of death that there is an answer that God had already prepared. Do you believe in this? This is the reason why God tells us to pray. This is the reason why God tells us to hold on to his word and pray. That is why God says, "when you remain in me and my word remains in you, ask and it will be given on to you." This is John 15:7 this is what Jesus said directly to us. This is the reason why we are told to seek, ask and knock on the door because God already knows what we need. Have assurance that you are already the summit that already have the answers prepared. God who unsparingly gave his only son to us what else would he withhold from us? He will give us everything else as well. That is the promise of Romans 8:32. This is the important content that Isaac held on to, this is what enabled him to not fight but yet yield and win. Remember this as you return. I have been selected by God. I have been given God's covenant. For me, God's answers have been prepared. It not that you have to pray a lot to receive answers. We can receive answer because those answers have been already prepared. Confess this with the people around us, you have been given God's selection. You are holding on to God's covenant. For you, God's answers have been prepared. Is that true?

<Conc.>

Let us come to the conclusion. In Isaiah 53 it says, "like a lamb taken to its death bed. Like a lamb sitting still before being sheared. The sheep does not open its mouth. He did not fight back, he did not speak ill in his words. A sheep before it is sheared doesn't fight back. Who is this referring? This is referring Jesus. Jesus did not fight back on his road to the cross. Why? Because Jesus already knew that God had prepared resurrection. He is our Lord. He wants to live his life through us. Abraham who waited for the Lord with his faith did not fight. When they were dividing the wealth between his cousin Lot, he gave him the choice first. In the new testament same thing for Paul. Paul, who met the Lord after resurrection, he also didn't fight. Although he was in a dispute with barnabas, he gave the first choice to him. It doesn't mean we need to endure everything. We are not fighting because we already know that God's time schedule will come so we must hold on to his word and his covenant. Ultimately, it is God who will lift me. At the end, it is God who will make the enemies kneel on their knees. It is not because I am so great but because it is God who will lift me up to the place of the summit. Because we know this, that is why we do not need to fight nor compete. That is a person of God, a Christian and a person who has the gospel. I bless you that in your interpersonal relationships you will be give answers that will be incomparable.

Let us pray,

Almighty Father God, we return to you our glory and praise. We believe that you have already prepared the answers of the summit. Help us to lay down all the physical fights of the world and instead in our spiritual fight, help us to be victorious. Help us to realize that we are the chosen people of God. Help us to have the faith that the covenant will be absolutely fulfilled. Help us to understand that the reason why God has allowed these problems in my life is because he has already prepared the answer. May the message that is being proclaimed to the pulpit may it be rooted in the lives of our church members. In the name of Jesus, we pray, Amen.