

2020.10.04 Sunday Sermon <Both Now and Forever>

Isaiah 43: 1 & 7

*But now, this is what the Lord says— he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel:
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.
Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”*

Psalm 115:1-11, 17-18

¹ *Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.*

² *Why do the nations say, “Where is their God?”*

³ *Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.*

⁴ *But their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands.*

⁵ *They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see.*

⁶ *They have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell.*

⁷ *They have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but cannot walk, nor can they utter a sound with their throats.*

⁸ *Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.*

⁹ *All you Israelites, trust in the Lord—he is their help and shield.*

¹⁰ *House of Aaron, trust in the Lord—he is their help and shield.*

¹¹ *You who fear him, trust in the Lord—he is their help and shield.*

¹⁷ *It is not the dead who praise the Lord, those who go down to the place of silence;*

¹⁸ *it is we who extol the Lord, both now and forevermore. Praise the Lord.^[a]*

Psalms 115-118 are made of hymns sung every year during Passover.

In particular, through Psalm 115 we are able to receive three lessons for today's sermon.

As you may know, today marks the 46th anniversary of our church. Instead of celebrating this anniversary with everyone at church, we are scattered all over due to the pandemic. Let us take this moment to look back at the past years as we listen to the word of God.

1. First Lesson –Give Glory to the Lord

- **Psalm 115:1**

¹ *Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.*

Our Father provided salvation, protection, guidance...He is our creator and our hope. We need to lift His and give glory to Him.

- **Psalm 115:3**

³ *Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.*

- **1 Corinthians 4:7**

⁷ *For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?*

As human beings, we love to boast about ourselves. But we must realize...we received EVERYTHING through our Lord.

- **Romans 11:36**

For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

- **Isaiah 42:8**

“I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols.

- During George Washington's first inauguration, many people came and celebrated by lifting up Washington's name. While everyone is glorifying Washington, his own mother said to everyone..."Give glory to the Lord not to my son."

- **Psalm 127:1-2**

¹ *Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.*

Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.

² *In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat— for he grants sleep to^[a] those he loves.*

2. Second Lesson - Trust in the Lord

- **Psalm 115: 9-11**

⁹ *All you Israelites, trust in the Lord—he is their help and shield.*

¹⁰ *House of Aaron, trust in the Lord—he is their help and shield.*

¹¹ *You who fear him, trust in the Lord—he is their help and shield.*

In response to the superiority of God over worthless and powerless idols, the Psalm 115 urges Israel, the priests, and those who fear the Lord to trust God who is their help and shield.

- **Psalm 115: 4-8**

⁴ *But their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands.*

⁵ *They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see.*

⁶ *They have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell.*

⁷ *They have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but cannot walk, nor can they utter a sound with their throats.*

⁸ *Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.*

Someone who worships an inanimate object is less than wise himself. To worship an idol, brings no power at all. They have no thought deeper than what they can see. Their judgement is impaired as well. As Elijah proved that day, they cannot respond at all to the people worshipping them, and the people worshipping them cannot respond either.

- **Image of May 10th, 2018 (2:42 AM) -**

Three American prisoners freed from North Korea arrived to U.S. and was personally welcomed from President Trump, who traveled to an air base in the middle of the night to meet them. Waving their hands and flashing peace signs, the freed prisoners — Kim Dong-chul, Tony Kim and Kim Hak-song — descended the stairs of their plane, flanked by the president and senior administration officials, including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who had flown to Pyongyang, the North's capital, to secure their release.

Pastor Kim Dong-chul said following in an interview: " I came to think that the relationship between the state and the people is the same as parents and children. I haven't done anything for America. The reason I went to North Korea was not for the United States, but for the Korean Peninsula. Still, the United States rescued me. Just because you are American. I am a foreign immigrant who settled late and I can't speak English well. I felt with my whole body that the United States is a country that takes responsibility for its people." If a country like U.S. can provide such a feeling to this immigrant...what about the Lord in Heaven? If we trust in Him - He will take care of us.

- **Psalm 138:8**

The Lord will vindicate me; your love, Lord, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands.

Lord is forever. Let us rely and trust in Him and Him ONLY.

3. Third Lesson – Only Give Blessings to Others

- **Psalm 115: 14-15**

¹⁴ *May the Lord cause you to flourish, both you and your children.*

¹⁵ *May you be blessed by the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

Because we are children of God, He will bless us. Due to His blessings, we are ALIVE.

- **Psalm 115: 12-13**

¹² *The Lord remembers us and will bless us: He will bless his people Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron,*
¹³ *he will bless those who fear the Lord—small and great alike.*

- **Psalm 109:17**

He loved to pronounce a curse—may it come back on him.
He found no pleasure in blessing—may it be far from him.

But what if we curse at others and bring each other down? On September 29th, there was a first presidential debate for 2020 election. The 90 minute debate was so awful, I had to turn the TV off.

- We were call to be His people...His children...for what?

1 Peter 3:8

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

1 Peter 3:9

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

He brought us together to encourage each other. We became His sons and daughters to love one another. We are here together to bless one another.

- Story of irresponsible husband's wife -
 There was a husband, who went crazy on finding treasures through mining. He didn't take care of his family and didn't provide an financial help for his family...he only cared for his work in mining. It was difficult for the wife to raise the children alone and she started to curse her husband left and right. One day, she read Romans 12:20 - "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." These words pierced her heart and from then on, instead of cursing her husband, she began to bless him. One day she received a letter from her husband - the letter was filled with sweet messages. She continued on giving blessing to her husband. The next month, she received another letter saying - "From now on, I will provide living expenses so don't worry and take care of yourself." The wife continued blessing her husband. Few months later she received another letter from her husband saying - "In Fall, I will be finished with mining and will head home." When he arrived...he was totally a changed man.
- Story of a store owner -
 A small store owner went to his teacher and consulted about a big chain store being built across from his own store. The owner worried that if his 10 year old business fails...he has nowhere to go. The teacher told the owner, "If you fear about the big chain store, you will start to hate them and that hatred will ruin your life." The owner asked, "so what should I do?" The teacher told him, "every morning go out in the front of the store to bless your store. Turn around and bless the big chain store. The blessing you give to the other store will come back to you." The next day, the owner followed the teacher's consulting. Few year later...the small store owner became the owner of the big chain store.

In Summary -

Now and forever, know that being alive is a blessing and a chance given by the Lord.

- 1. Give glory to the Lord**
- 2. Trust in the Lord**
- 3. Only give blessing to others**