

Chosen by God - Sunday, July 27th 2014

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, “ Ephesians 1:3-5

Beloved in The Lord,

Before God even created the world and before He created man, He already knew you and me. He knew who you would be, when you would be born, what your life would be. He knew what He had predestined for you. This is a staggering thought, and one that is very hard for us to comprehend with our finite minds. Think about it: God knew you before He created everything! David wrote in Psalm 139:

“O Lord, You have searched me and known me.

² You know when I sit down and when I rise up;

You understand my thought from afar.

³ You scrutinize my path and my lying down,

And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.

⁴ Even before there is a word on my tongue,

Behold, O Lord, You know it all.

⁵ You have enclosed me behind and before,

And laid Your hand upon me.

⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

It is too high, I cannot attain to it “ (Psalm 139:1-6).

David says it so well. He confesses that God knows all things and then he rightly states that this knowledge is too hard for him to comprehend.

The good news is that we do not need to comprehend it. If we understood all things then we would be God. God gives us understanding in the things that we need to know. He helps us to comprehend the things that help us to live in faith and to honour Him with our lives. He reveals to us the things we need.

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law” (Deut.29:29).

You see there are secret things, known only to God. There are many things that we do not understand and do not need to understand. We need to strive to understand the things that God has revealed to us, so that we live life to the fullest.

What I desire to achieve with today's sermon is to bring you to the point where doubts and fears disappear, and life is lived in full trust and reliance upon God, and that we understand that all that we have, comes from Him in the first place.

God knew you, and He predestined you to be born, even before He created the world. You are not an accident. You were born when you were born, where you were born, to who you were born, because God had for ordained it to be before the foundation of the world. He knew what you would look like, who you will be, what you will do. He also know how long you will live.

Back to Psalm 139:

"Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them" (Psalm 139:16).

You see. all your days were written in God's book before you arrived in this world. Why does God reveal this truth to us in His Word? I believe that there are at least two reasons: Firstly, that we would understand that He is absolutely Sovereign and knows all things and secondly that we would not worry about our life but trust in Him in all things.

God is absolutely sovereign! When, and if we begin to understand this truth, then it sets us free. Jesus said that we would know the truth and the truth would set us free. This is a truth that truly does set us free and allows us to live life to its fullest.

God is absolutely sovereign. He is the commander and chief. He is the one who orders the universe. Nothing happens outside of His knowledge. He is Omniscient (all knowing); Omnipotent (all-powerful); Omnipresent (everywhere). God is Almighty.

You are alive because God ordained it to be that way. You have gifts and abilities and talents because God gave them to you. If you are His child through faith in Jesus Christ, then that is because God gave you the faith to trust in Jesus. Jesus clearly taught His disciples and these words also apply to us:

"You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you" (John 15:16).

Clearly, Jesus tells us that He chose us, not the other way around. It is important that we understand this truth. There is no room for us to be proud and to boast about our salvation and there is no room for us to judge others. The choice is God's and His alone. He has chosen to show us His love and grace and mercy. We have not earned it, we do not deserve it, but in His love He has called us and chosen us to be His children. Our task is to humble ourselves before Him every day and to thank Him for His tremendous Grace.

You see, absolutely everything is dependent upon Him, and so it follows that all glory and honour and praise should go to Him alone. God is absolutely sovereign and all things are dependent upon Him.

We read in Romans 9:15-16: ***“For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.”***

Oh how liberating it is when we begin to comprehend this truth! Everything is dependent upon God, His will, His mercy.

We read a little further in Romans:

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? ³⁵ Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? ³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen “ (Romans 11:33-36).

My friends, take these words on board. Sink them deep into your heart: ***“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.”*** This dove tails so beautifully into the second point, namely that we would not worry about our life but trust in Him in all things.

In His Sermon on the Mount Jesus spoke about flowers in the field and birds of the air, and about how God cares for them. Then He said: ***“Are you not worth much more than they? ²⁷ And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?” (Matthew 6:26-27)***

Of course the answer is no-one can add a single hour to his or her life by being worried. Jesus is teaching us not to worry because worry is unbelief, it is a lack of trust in God The Father.

When we understand, or at least begin to understand that God is absolutely sovereign, then the next step is to commit absolutely everything to Him in faith. This means to hand over the reins of your life to Him, trusting in Him in all things. It means to swim in the flow of God’s will. This however does not mean that we become fatalistic and say whatever will be, will be. No. Trusting in God is actively seeking His face, seeking to know His will. We ask God to reveal His will and purpose to us, and then we ask Him to help us to fulfil it in our lives. We pray that His will and purpose be realised in our life.

When we trust in Him in this way, then there is no room for ongoing stress and worry. We need not be anxious about anything. There is no room for negative thinking. When we feel negative thoughts assailing us, we need to repel them and remind ourselves that we have given over control to God our Heavenly Father and that He has promised to take care of us.

Sometimes it is relatively easy to do this at other times not so easy at all. It is a spiritual battle and can be very fierce.

Paul writes: ***“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, ⁴ for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. ⁵ We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete” (2.Cor.10:3-6).***

You see, we are to destroy all speculations and every lofty thing that rises up against God in our minds. When we experience wrong thoughts we need to repel them and replace them with God’s Word.

For example when Satan tries to place a thought in your mind that God has abandoned you, forsaken you, you reply with Jesus words:

“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.” (John 6:37) and also: “and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt.28:20)

When you get a thought that you cannot cope and that you will run out of resources then you repel that thought with God’s promise:

“And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

When Satan tells you that you cannot do what God has called you to do, you hit back with:

“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13)

When you get the thought that you cannot go on because of failing strength then be encouraged with God’s promise:

***“Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength;
They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired,
They will walk and not become weary” (Isaiah 40:31)***

You see, God has provided a word for us for any and everything we need. Trust in Him. Rely upon Him. Surrender all to Him and understand that He loves you, He has chosen you, you are precious in His sight and He upholds you in the palm of His hand.

Submit to Him, Surrender, let go and let God! May God help us all.

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All Bible quotations taken from NAS Bible.