

Title: “We are His Chosen”

Chris Ryan

2 Sam 7:1-11, 16, Luke 1:26-38

12/20/2020

Lesson: *When God chooses you, your world turns upside down, inside out. We resist because we want to be chosen but we also want to be free. And this is what drives us to his Word, in search of understanding, in search of trust. We have to first trust that which we turn our lives over to. And thanks be to God that he makes plain the reason to trust him.*

Message:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

I begin this morning with a portion of the OT passage. Starting in verse 1.

7 Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ² the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” ³ And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you.”

⁴ But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, ⁵ “Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in?’

Can you imagine Nathan the next morning as he spoke to the king? “So, you know that one idea you had last night? You know, the one you thought was a good idea, and the one *I* thought was a good idea, and the one that I told you *God* would think was a good idea? Yea, well, about that.... Not only did he *not* agree with us, he declared that he will build *you* a house instead. And *that* house will stand forever” And how did King David feel? He had his own plans, plans that he thought would glorify God. His intention seemed good and “holy.” It seemed like he was trying to *please* God so it must have hurt just a bit to find out God didn’t agree. God had his own plans and they didn’t include a temple built by David. And I imagine that what pained him just as much was when God reminded him that he had been chosen as God’s servant.

⁸ Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince^[a] over my people Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you.....And I will give you rest from all your enemies....¹⁶ And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.^[a] Your throne shall be established forever.’”

At this point in his life, David was living large. He was victorious in his battles, brought peace to the land, and his kingdom was wealthy beyond measure. He was loved by his people, loved by his God but at that moment he was being reminded of his place in God's creation. He was created by God, and used by God, and all his successes, all his achievements were realized *because* of God. His life was changed in unimaginable ways *because God chose him*.

We see a similar story play out in the Gospel reading today. Starting in verse 26:

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed^a to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"^b ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary was minding her own business, living her life and planning for her wedding. She probably had the cards picked out, the caterer selected, and was finalizing the color choices for her entourage. Like David, she was living a life that she thought was glorifying God but then this angel appears and notifies her that God chosen her and that her life will be far different than anything she had imagined.

It is so easy to read about all of these people in the bible, from Adam to Noah to Abraham to Moses to David to Mary to the disciples.... all of them and recognize how plainly the bible describes how *God first chooses them and then uses* them to accomplish his will but then dismiss the thought that he would first *choose us and then use us* to the same end. We think that these people are somehow different, somehow unique, somehow have an ear to hear that we do not. That somehow, they can see God's plan for them and for the world painted in vibrant colors with bright arrows pointing to their own placement in his work. But they can't. Just look at how the disciples ran when Jesus was crucified! Look at how they locked themselves in a room and lamented that the one they thought was from God, the one they thought *was* God, was just.... dead. They had no picture to look at. They had only trust that Jesus was who he said that he was, and at that moment they were questioning themselves.

When God chooses you, your world turns upside down, inside out. When God chooses you, he doesn't give you a special pin to attach to your lapel or teach you a secret handshake that opens heaven's gates. When God chooses you, he kills you. He hangs you on the cross with his Son to die because that is what you deserve. When God chooses you, you die. And after your death he places you in the tomb. But then. But then because Jesus suffered the punishment for your sins, he raises you from the dead. He gives you a new life in the risen Christ. **You are alive and Christ lives in you**

because God chooses you. And then with this new life he sends you out into the world to do his work.

On this side of heaven, it may not make sense, but that is the point I'm making. God's ways are bigger than our ways. We can't comprehend him; we can't understand how and why he *works*! And so, we are left with only one choice: trust. We must trust in him. We must trust that his plans for us, although seemingly backward and upside down, are better for us than anything we can comprehend.

Being chosen by God is scary. Just ask Moses or Jonah! It is petrifying when you realize that you no longer belong to yourself but to God and he will use you to bring about completion of his plans. This realization creates conflict within us because we want to be chosen but we also want to be free. And this is what drives us to his Word, in search of understanding, in search of trust. We have to first trust that which we turn our lives over to. And thanks be to God that he makes plain the reason to trust him. Unlike David or Mary or even the disciples we *do* have the complete picture, painted by the Bible. Nothing is hidden; nothing is ambiguous. God uses a large brush and vivid colors so there is no chance for us to not find reason to place our trust in him.

We have one example of that today in our Old and New Testament passages.

In the OT reading God says:

16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.^[a] Your throne shall be established forever.'"

And in the NT God says:

And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

He makes it crystal clear that he has a purpose for David and a purpose for Mary and that these purposes are tightly linked to each other, even though they span thousands of years and even though neither of them may have fully understood that connection. And yet, they placed their trust in God, believing that his ways were bigger than theirs.

Being chosen by God is scary because we are unwilling to place our entire trust into his hands, but we can pray that the Holy Spirit will increase our faith so that we can continue to build our trust in him. And through this trust we can let go of our desires for our own lives and allow God to turn it upside down, inside out. And we can find comfort, not fear, in the knowledge that God has chosen us. And we can trust that the plans he has for us are so much better than the ones we can ever imagine on our own. God has chosen you. Do you trust him with that choice?

Let us pray.
God,

You are the creator and we are the created. You have brought us into this world and breathed life into us for your glory. You call us your chosen, but we resist and push against your will. We fight for our freedom. But while we were still enemies you sent your Son to suffer the judgment that we deserve and handed to us the victory that he won. We pray that you continue to use us, that you continue to strengthen in us faith to trust in your will and walk in your ways.

In your name we pray.

Amen.