Chosen and Changed

**Experience entering into God’s choosing**

**Monday**

Read Matthew 19:13-15, John 6:37, John 6:44, John 12:32, John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9, Ezekiel 33:11

* *If you come to Jesus, He is not going to reject you. Jesus calls everyone and loves everyone. God is choosing you.*

**Tuesday**

Read John 15:16, Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 1;11, Romans 8:33

* *Without thinking about anyone else in the whole world, meditate on the fact that God chose you, He picked you.*

**Wednesday**

Read Matthew 22:1-14, John 1:12, Revelations 3:20

* *The Bible is very clear that to be chosen, an invitation is required. Furthermore, all mankind is invited. How are you responding to God’s invitation for your choosing?*

**Thursday**

Read Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 5:8, James 2:5, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, Deuteronomy 7:7-8.

* *Journalize how God chooses people for Himself and His purpose.*

**Friday**

Read Matthew 19:16-30

* *Using all the scriptures you have read this week, attempt to explain how the young man’s outcome could have been different so that he entered into God’s choosing.*

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**Matthew 18**

**18**At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest (better than others, always comparing ourselves to others, insecurity vs pride - both are the same thing and are sin, always having to be right) in the kingdom of heaven?”

**2**He called a **little** child to him, and placed the child among them. **3**And he said: “Truly I tell you, **unless you change and become** like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven (will not enter into God’s chosing). **4**Therefore, whoever takes the **lowly** position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (enters into God’s choosing). **5**And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

When you enter into God’s choosing you are changed for the better.

**Take the lowly position** - you accept the humbling circumstance you are dealt. Becomes low, humiliated so that Jesus invites you to be be fully dependent on Him. You dismiss reliance on self, emptying your ego and, consequently, God exalts us.

**Will you enter into God’s choosing by cooperating with the humbling experiences of life, so that you depend on Jesus?**

**Matthew 19:13**Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.

**14**Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” **15**When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

John 6:37 All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me (to be dependent on Jesus, because life has humbled you) I will never drive away.

John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.

John 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

Why does he draw all people?

John 3:16 For God **so loved** the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**2 Peter 3:9**The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

**Ezekiel 33:11 New International Version (NIV)**

**11**Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?’

Do we choose God or does God choose us?

**John 15:16 New International Version (NIV)**

**16**You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit

**Ephesians 1:4 AMPC**

“Even as [in His love] He chose us [actually picked us out for Himself as His own] in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy (consecrated and set apart for Him) and blameless in His sight, even above reproach, before Him in love.”

**Ephesians 1:11 New International Version (NIV)**

**11**In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

**Romans 8:33**

Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

What conclusions would you draw if these were the only scriptures you read or if these were the scriptures you focused on?

You might conclude that God chooses some, and in doing so doesn’t choose others.

But don’t you think it is important read scriptures in the context in which they are written and in the overall context of the entire Bible, understanding the heart and nature of God and His son Jesus?

**Matthew 22:14**“For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

The tone and our understanding of God’s choosing changes with this statement and the parable that is associated with this statement.

How do we respond to the invitation? By simply accepting and receiving the invitation…as a little, humble child would.

**John 1:12**Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

**Revelation 3:20 New International Version (NIV)**

**20**Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Would God ever invite someone with the premeditated intent of not choosing them?

Doesn’t the fundamental nature of an invitation indicate that if you accept the invitation you will be accepted and chosen?!?

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Is God’s choosing unknowable and unsearchable and hidden with God where He arbitrarily and mystically chooses some to go to heaven and chooses the rest to go to hell, without any remedy?

Is there a condition or criteria for God’s choosing?

First we must understand that the salvation of our souls and lives is met by no condition within us.

**Ephesians 2:8-9 New International Version (NIV)**

**8**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9**not by works, so that no one can boast.

There is absolutely no way for us to perform, earn or work for our choosing in God. He saves us because of His love and His grace.

God gave us His son, while we were in rebellion against God.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

So does this lead us to conclude that there is unconditional election by God???

The Bible is EXTREMELY clear how God chooses us, without compromising His grace or love.

James 2:5 NIV

“Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?”

Poor - to crouch or cower like a beggar, helpless like a beggar, vulnerable, spiritually poor, destitute

Anyone who has come to the end of their rope, someone who has come to the end of them self…that is who God chooses.

Do you have to have something bad happen to you to get to this place….NO! You just get to the end of yourself…you are HUMBLED.

So there is the criteria God uses for choosing His people without compromising His grace.  It is our poorness and inability that qualifies us.

In love and because of His promise, He reaches out and choses those who run out of themselves.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 NIV

“Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God **chose** the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God **chose** the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God **chose** the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 NIV

“The Lord did not set his affection on you and **choose you** because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it (God chose you) was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

**God calls and invites you with the express purpose of choosing you. Will you depend on Him???**

**Matthew 19:16**Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, (Mark 10 - the young man run up to Jesus and knelt before Him - evidence of desperation, humility, desire) “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

**17**“Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.”

**18**“Which ones?” he inquired.

Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, **19**honor your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’”

**20**“All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”

**21**Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” (Jesus called the young man just as He has called His 12 disciples and many others. Jesus wouldn’t call or invite someone, unless He had a place of choosing for the young men…that is not how our God operates)

**22**When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. (He didn’t walk away because he wasn’t chosen by God. He didn’t walk away because God had predestined him to hell. He walked away because of a personal decision)

**23**Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. **24**Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” (Jesus did not say, This man cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven because he is not chosen. No…Jesus pointed to the fact that the young had not reached the end of himself enough to enter into God choosing.)

**25**When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, “Who then can be saved?”

**26**Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” (Jesus didn’t say, Only the chosen are saved, He said, I know how to help people get to the end of themselves so they are finally willing to depend of me and therefore enter into their eternal choosing.)

**27**Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?”

**28**Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. **29**And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. **30**But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

God is calling you into His choosing but we must be like a lowly child:

* Cooperate with your humiliating circumstances and put your trust in God.
* Come to an end of yourself, open the door of your life, let Jesus come in.

- God is opening the door of His choosing for you, would you walk into that choosing? Would you become His?