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Your Election Is God's Decision

Deuteronomy 7:6-9

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Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Studies have estimated that on average the person makes it 35,000 decisions a day. They say that over 200 of those decisions are simply about food alone. Discussions are big – like water we can eat tonight; some decisions are little – like does this piece of cardboard going to recycling or the trash. Some decisions come to us instinctively and are obvious. – Like whether you will root for the Minnesota Vikings or the Green Bay Packers; obviously Vikings. But some decisions require a little bit more thinking. Who should I vote for? Who should I marry? What career should I pursue?

We weigh the options, and sometimes the options are not clear. But what about those times when the choice is so clear, so self evident that the responses instinctive. It's so obvious, you have no doubt. You're not going to look back.

If you have to choose between a candidate who says let's make America great again and a candidate who says lets a ruin America, the choice is obvious. If you are trying to make a choice between getting married to someone who is disabled, mentally unstable, and poor, versus someone who is fit, organized, and productive—the choice might seem obvious. And if you need to choose between pursuing a career in a business that's headed down the drain and into bankruptcy, vs. a company that's on the upstart with investors waiting at the door—you easily know what to do.

Do we sometimes suppose God thinks in such terms. Does He weigh the options the way we do? Does he consider how great the candidate is; how attractive the spouse looks; how accomplished the business leader is? Does God look us over and come to the obvious decision?

Today's sermon is about your election. And what we mean by election is simply a choosing. It's the word we use to speak of being chosen by God to be saved. It is your predestination; your being chosen by God in eternity. This is something that is God's decision alone to make. So how does He make such a choice?

Deuteronomy 7:6–9

⁶ “For you *are* a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷ The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; ⁸ but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ “Therefore know that the Lord your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

1. God did not choose you based on your attractiveness

Some might think that God's decision was based on how attractive look to him. We might begin to get the idea that God selected us out of all the people of the world because he liked how we looked and liked where we were headed. We might think there was something in us and our personality or in our dress that has made God interested in us. Are you attractive to God?

After all we often approach other situations and decisions the same way – especially when it comes to marriage how many of us began dating someone simply because we found them physically attractive? And how many avoided that other gal or guy because we didn't like the way they looked? Love in the mind of most in America has to do with a sense of attraction; and infatuation about how the other person makes us feel.

We "set our love" on things because of how they look. We are attracted to someone's personality. We like the way they dress. We are drawn to their fit frame. We pursue their productive pocketbook. Love is for many a kind of romantic expression, feeling. It is like a shiny trophy that we imagine will never rust. And marriages rise and fall based on this thinking.

Perhaps God is the same way. He likes the way you look; or he doesn't like the way you look. He likes the way you're dressed, organized, in shape, productive, he wants people who are successful. But what happens then when the looks are lost? When the laughs become lonely? When the fitness fades? When the finances fail? When that spouse becomes depressed or sick? God has seen ugly side – the arguments, the selfishness, the thoughts that are stirring. He has seen us for who we really are. Does He then divorce us?

v.7 The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples;

Israel is not chosen because of its attractiveness. They were not great athletes, they were a short people. They were not well dressed, they were slaves. They were not productive, they complained. They were not loyal, they were disobedient. Israel was not chosen based on their attractiveness, and neither are we.

2. God did not choose you based on your accomplishments

Well, if its not our looks, maybe it has to do with our great decision making. One area of life that our culture truly values and rewards his decision-making. Whether you're in the corporate world earn an investment situation, those that succeed, those that make their way up the ladder, are the decision-makers. Countless seminars, webinars, books, articles have been written all because they want to make people that are decision-makers.

We turn on our TV to a show like shark tank we see it play out before our eyes. Who can make the best deal in the quickest deal? The pressures on. You have to be on your toes. You have to take it or leave it. You have to evaluate the situation the money involved the people involved and make up your mind and go with your gut. These are the successful people that live in the business world. They know what to make decisions.

Maybe God is looking for the same thing in you. Where is your life moving? Maybe he's looking for Christians who are driven, or making great things happen, who are making churches grow, who are seeing budgets increased; who are organized have it together and are great decision-makers.

What happens then in the business world when things become stalled? What happens when you stutter and stumble and get stuck – drop him. God is a doer, he's a mover – he's got no time for Christians who are indecisive, slow, ignorant, boring, introverted, passive, quiet, stuck.

And so God looks at his investment, and says, "because you are afraid, because you are slow, because you are sinful, because you are stuck – for those reasons, I'm out ... You're dead to me."

Yet as we look at all the successful deals that have come from those great decision makers, have they really made the greatest deal? When Sunday morning rolls around and our mind is consumed by the decisions and money to be made in the week ahead, do we make the right choice? When we are overtaken by greed and lust and pride, do we make the choice to repent? When we are born, captive to our sinful flesh, do we simply choose to get rid of it and become something perfect?

v.7 The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples;

It was not Israel's choice that got them out of Egypt. They were slaves, with nothing to choose but whether to serve or whether to die. They were poor and hopeless and helpless. They were slow, they complained, and they had no leadership. They were a business that was headed down the drains; they were a people who were stuck. Yes, God did not choose them because of their accomplishments, nor does he do so with you.

3. You were chosen because of God's grace

If it was not because of your attractiveness and it not because of your decision, then what was the basis for God's decision to save you?

Deuteronomy 7:8 but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

This is why God has invested Himself. Here we have the greatest decision maker of all time, making the greatest decision of all time—to further His kingdom. Yet here is God, slowing down, turning his attention to you, seeing all your troubles, struggles, complaining, sin, stuckness – and he stops everything he's doing to save you. And this was because of two simple reasons: (1) His love and (2) His promise. It is God's love and God's promise that give us God's grace.

Notice that in God's mind greatness is not making America a powerful nation; but allowing each of us to become poor helpless and ruined. Notice that attractiveness in the mind of God does not look at how we look, but sees our ugliness, knows how unfit you are, and realizes that we will fail him. And notice that the decision to save you has nothing to do with your decision at all, but has everything to do with God's decision in Christ.

This is how grace works. It is what one pastor called "anyway Grace." What that means is that God loves you anyway and because of Christ. Two simple things love and promise. That is grace the love that God has for you, and the promise that he's made in Christ Jesus. It is a marriage unlike the marriages that this world knows. It is a marriage which is not based on a conditional romance and infatuation. It does not fade with time it does not change with circumstance. Rather it is an unconditional sacrifice; an undeserved and relentlessly unconditional giving.

Ephesians 1:4 just as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

God's love and grace and choosing of you is based on Christ alone. The phrase “set his love on,” comes from a Hebrew word meaning “bonded together.” Stuck to each other. It is like a wedding band that's bonded on your finger. As the years grow on perhaps it gets harder to get that ring off at night. When your fingers are swollen from a long day of struggle and sweat, you find yourself bonded to that band. That band represents a love that's been set on you and that you set on another person. And that bond is Christ's love. He has set his love on us. He is given us his Holy Spirit in baptism bonding himself to us forever. We are His special treasure. Not because of how shiny we are, but because He has made us shine. When the looks are lost; when the laughs turn lonely; when the fitness fades – he will not leave and his love will never fade. We can leave him, we can fade away, but he will never leave us. Let us still call on him, want him, trust him—then we will know the love of Christ which is bonded to us forever.

Romans 8:38–39 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

They say that we make up to 35,000 decisions a day. Who are we gonna vote for? Who will we marry? What career will we choose? But of all the decisions which could be bigger than this one? Who is our God? And yet in the biggest decision of our life it has become so obvious and so certain that we don't make the decision at all. God has already made up his mind. He's made an oath since the time of Abraham and even now in your life. In the waters of baptism he made his mind up, "you are mine." Amen.