

I Have Chosen You

#0932

Study given by W.D. Frazee—July 20, 1968

I invite you turn to John, the 15th chapter. These are the words that Jesus spoke to His disciples on the way from the upper room, as they were walking toward the garden of Gethsemane. In the first part of the chapter, He presents Himself as the living Vine. Each of us is a branch of that Vine if we abide in Him.

Now, beginning with the 9th verse, I read:

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...” John 15:9-16.

I love these words from the lips of our Lord. You notice that His purpose is to make us happy.

“These things...” John 15:11.

He says.

“...have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” John 15:11.

If our joy is full, then we're joyful, aren't we? Yes. And this is the way to be joyful, to listen to what He says, do what He commands and enter into His plans and purposes for us.

The One who made us, made us with certain longings, certain desires. He gave us a stomach and a desire for food. He gave us muscles and a natural desire to use them. He gave us eyes and a never-ending curiosity to see this and that and something else. He gave us ears and the desire to hear.

But most of all and best of all, deep within all, He gave us a heart that longs for love—longs to be appreciated, longs to be understood, longs to be selected,

elected, chosen. And all of these desires that He has planted within us, He has provided to satisfy.

The pity of it all is that nearly everybody in the world is looking everywhere except the one place where their deepest desires could be fully satisfied. The relationships between Jesus and each soul are as distinct as though that one were the only one in all the world—the only one for whom the price of Calvary was paid.

So I wish that this morning each of us might in a sense forget this audience and forget the world around us. And that each of us might hear individually this morning the voice of Jesus speaking to us saying, I have chosen you, I have chosen you.

And I'm sure that in many a heart, one of the first thoughts that will come to our minds as we hear those words from Jesus is, "I wonder what He sees in me. If He has really chosen me, I wonder what He would see in me anyway." Well, my dear friends, may I put it very simply, that's up to Him. He knows what He's doing.

"...it doth not yet appear what we shall be..." 1 John 3:2.

We do not know the wonderful things that God has wrapped up in each individual. Here's a little acorn. I look at it, and if I knew nothing of botany, nothing of living things, if somebody would say to me, "What do you see in that?" I'd say, Not much. Might make some food for a pig if he was hungry. Pigs like acorns, you know.

But, ah, to those who understand the mystery, a little acorn has wrapped up within it, a *mighty* oak. Do you see that oak in the acorn? God sees something wonderful in you. He sees something wonderful in you. Oh, that the promise might be fulfilled. Oh, that the plan might be carried out. Oh, that the expectations might be realized! I have chosen you. I have a plan for you. I want to make you happy. I want to fill your heart with love. I want you to know that *you* are selected in a very special way. You are elected to a very special work. I have chosen you.

Is it really so, friends? Ah, it is so, indeed! Now, don't leave this page, because we want to notice some other words here, but in the first chapter of Ephesians, the fourth verse, Paul tells us something wonderful about this choosing. He says that:

"...[God] hath chosen us in him..." Ephesians 1:4.

When?

"...before the foundation of the world..." Ephesians 1:4.

So, not only is the wonderful fact before us that God has chosen us, but wonder of wonders, He chose us before the world was made. God looked down the stream of time, on past the rise and falls of empires, and He saw you. You, standing out, not merely one of a crowd, not merely a tiny cell in a vast universe, He saw you personally, individually, and He planned for you. He chose you.

Have you chosen Him? For, may I tell you, friends, it takes both choices to make the plan complete.

Look now, again, at John 15, the ninth verse:

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you” John 15:9.

Do you really mean, Jesus, that you love me the way the Father loves you? That’s what He says. And His word is true and He cannot lie. Jesus loves you as much as the Father loves Jesus? Did you know it? Have you thought about it?

Ah, my friends, if that thought can ever penetrate the inner recesses of the soul, nothing else will matter in life except to return that love, to reciprocate that love, to appreciate that love and to share it with others. *This* is why we were born.

And may I tell you a wonderful secret about love. Some of you know the secret. If you don’t, you can. This is the secret, one who only receives love never knows the better part of it—the better half of it. Love, in its completeness, love in its fullness, is known only as we love others, not merely are loved by others. Unless we reflect the love of Jesus back to Him, we are dark bodies.

Look at the moon out there in a lovely night, radiant with light. Why does it shine? Ah, it shines with reflected light. Its ability to reflect is the measure of its brilliance. And so, my dear friends, think not to merely absorb love—absorb love and thereby get more. Oh, no, no. You will never know the meaning of love, either human or divine, if you merely receive, absorb, gather to yourself, like a sponge. Ah, friends, love is known, I repeat, in its fullness, only by those who love.

Now, let’s turn and read that in 1 John, the fourth chapter—1 John 4, verses seven and eight:

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” 1 John 4:7-8.

God is what?

Love.

But an infinite God can pour out infinite love upon your heart and you can still be ignorant of what love is and what He is. Unless and until that love, received into your heart, is reflected back to Him and given back to Him as fully as He gives Himself to you. Unless that experience is yours, you do not know God and you do not know love. That’s what this says:

“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love”
1 John 4:8.

You know, there's many a soul that would say, hearing some of the things we have read and said this morning, "Oh, that's what I need. I need more love." There was a song some years ago that went the rounds, I Wish I Had Someone to Love Me. I think it was called the prisoner's song. Yes, the prisoner's song.

The pity of it all is, my friends, that many a man in jail—it may be behind iron bars or it may be merely in the jail of his own thoughts—is loved but he doesn't know it. And he can never know it until he opens his heart to the love of Jesus and starts loving back, starts returning, reciprocating, the love of God:

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love"
1 John 4:8.

Now, you remember we read there in John 15:

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" John 15:9.

I love you, He says, as much as My Father loves me. Oh, what a love—the love of the Father for the Son now given to you from the Godhead! Our little hearts could be filled to overflowing from that infinite ocean, that great reservoir, if we would just open and receive, and then impart.

You see, to get more in any container—to get more when it's full—the only way we can get more is to let some out. A pipe is like that, you know. It matters not whether the dimension is half inch or inch or two inch or four inch or six inch—it matters not the size of the pipe. Even a little pipe can take a lot of water if it'll just give a lot of water, provided of course, the connection with the great reservoir is maintained.

And this is the picture of the Christian, with the one hand as it were, connected to Jesus, and the other hand reaching out—the helping hand, the lifting hand, the aiding hand, the loving hand. What a picture, friend! And a person, who is in that condition has his hands full, doesn't he? He has no time nor space to spend in selfish pleasing.

Ah, so many unhappy souls today. These riots that now and then break out are the eruption of a volcano that is seething underneath all the time. And all the while, the One who made us says, "Come and I will give you rest, peace, joy, in knowing Me, in knowing that I love you, that I have chosen you. You are mine. You are special. I want you. I need you, and you need Me."

One of old poured out his heart in these words:

"Oh, God, Thou hast made us for Thyself,
And our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee"
Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, Confessions

And I tell you this, my friends—it matters little whether the thing we seek to satisfy our longing with is bad or good, if it is not Jesus, it will never fully, truly, satisfy. Even human beings cannot bring to us that inner satisfaction that only Christ can bring.

And so, this morning, if your heart is hungry for love, oh, I ask you to open your heart to the One who loves you a million times more than any father or mother or husband or wife or brother or sister could love anybody. The One who *made* love, the One who made us *to* love, He it is who wants to lavish upon us the infinite love of eternity!

Why not enter into it, friends? Why not receive Him? And when this experience is ours, religion will not be a ritual, a form. We shall not just say our prayers and say, “Oh, have we studied our Sabbath school lesson yet today?” Or, “Have I read the morning watch?”

This experience of fellowship—of knowing that He loves us and that we love Him—this, friends, can be ours while we’re washing the dishes or hoeing the corn, while we’re sweeping the floor or keeping the books, while we’re taking care of the children or driving the tractor. Whatever our experience from hour to hour, Jesus is with us, we are walking with Him, He is speaking with us those whispered words of love.

God has done many things for us to show us His love, but His gifts are never to be the substitute for the Giver. We are never to become so taken up with the things God has given us, the things He has done for us, and the loved ones He has surrounded us with, that they become a diverting influence to keep us from the One who has given us all these things.

What a shame it would be for a child to be so walled in by presents it had received from father or mother that it was taken up completely with those things and had little or no thought for the parents. So it is with many in this world.

Annie Johnson Flint has breathed this prayer, which I love:

“Not for peace and not for power,
Not for joy and not for light,
Not for truth and not for knowledge,
Not for courage in the fight.

“Not for strength to do Thee service,
Not for these my prayer shall be,
Not for any gifts or graces,
But for Thee, Lord, just for Thee.

“Make me lonely for Thy presence,
Every earthly friend above,
Make me thirst for Thine indwelling,
Make me hungry for Thy love.

“All the loveliness I long for,
All the best that I would be,
I can never find them elsewhere,
Than in Thee, Lord, just in Thee”
Annie Johnson Flint.

You remember in that last message to the last church, the Savior presents Himself as One knocking at the door. [Elder Frazee knocks on the pulpit] It's the heart door:

“I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice,
and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with
him, and he with me” Revelation 3:20.

The picture is one of fellowship. Not a brief call but a deep lasting fellowship. But where is He? At the door. What's He doing? Knocking. What does He want? He wants to come in. Well, why doesn't He come in? Why, indeed, why, indeed.

Some mornings ago, I knocked at a door and a little boy's voice inside said, “Come in,” but I tried the door and it was locked. He'd forgotten that it was locked, but by and by he caught on that I was still there on the porch, and he came and unlocked it. The lock, of course, was on the inside.

And so it is with your heart and mind, dear friends. As the song says, “You must open the door, you must open the door.” Ah, but why doesn't He just come in? Couldn't He break the lock? Yes. But a broken lock would mean a broken heart, and Jesus wants to fill your heart with joy, not with pain, with peace. He will not force—not in the slightest.

He, the King of the universe, who can speak and a world springs into existence—He waits on the porch while you and I make up our minds as to whether we shall receive the heavenly guest and give Him the love that He seeks. For that is His quest, my friends—He wants you. And your quest is to have Him.

He who made you, made you that way. He made you to fulfill the longing of His heart, and He made you so that He would fulfill the longing of your heart. Only as you receive His love, only as you reflect that love back to Him fully, completely, can His quest be satisfied and your quest be realized.

Oh, what a shame! What a shame, if we miss that. I have chosen you, He says. Will you choose Me? I have given all for you. Will you give all for Me?

You know, when this thing is settled, dear friends, it settles a thousand other questions. In recent weeks and months, the Lord has been teaching me through personal human experiences some precious lessons that I thank Him for with all my heart, and one of the lessons is this. May I share it with you in these simple words? It's a wonderful thing to love somebody so much that all you want is to know what they want.

You know, it was necessary for me to leave my wife out west for a period of rest and treatment, and as I drove back across the continent some weeks ago and finally arrived there in our little home, and I walked around and I looked at the pictures on the wall, I looked at the clothes hanging in the clothes closet, and I looked at the furniture, and I shall have to tell you honestly, friends, it never looked so, shall I say, worthless. I couldn't see anything in those things.

I thought in my soul, "What difference do things make anyway?" What difference do things make? And if somebody had brought me a golden chair instead of an ordinary chair, doubtless I would have thanked them—it would have been the courteous thing to do—but I don't think it would have made one difference in my feelings, my friends. Not one bit, not one bit.

There was something that I wanted, and I still want. There is a presence that I desire. I want to be with Helen. I want her to be with me. Well, somebody might say, "Well, then, why aren't you there this morning?"

Ah, my dear friends, I tell you very simply, she and I both know a greater love of which our human love is but the dim reflection, the distant echo, and because our first love is given to Him, we each choose to be, moment by moment, in the place of His appointment, fulfilling the mission and the commission that He has given to us. And thus, even the separation makes the love deeper, for in it we sense more than we have ever known before—shall I tell you what it is? something of the longing of the great heart of Jesus who yearns for you and me to be with Him.

And you know, I knelt down by my bed, and I said to my Savior, "O, Lord, do you really want me—this poor unworthy fellow—do you want me to be with you as much as I want Helen to be with me, do you?" And of course, the truth came flooding back upon my soul, He wants me a great deal more than I can ever want anybody.

What a shame to lengthen out the days of separation unnecessarily. What do you say, friends? And oh, the good news is this, that while He wants us there with Him on those golden streets, the thing He wants most of all right now is to walk with us these earthly paths.

He left heaven and came down and walked the ways of men that we might know how much He loves us and how much He wants to be with us and how much He wants us to be with Him. Oh, friends, let's send Him the word that he can have all there is of us and from this moment on, our one thought, our one desire, shall be merely to know what He desires and carry it out!

When this is settled, there will be no bargaining. There will be no thought, "How near can I get to hell and still escape and go to heaven. How near can I walk to the world and still have my name in the book of life." Oh, thoughts like that will be a million, million miles removed.

The joy of life, my friends, is to know that somebody loves you and that you love somebody so much that all you want is just to know what they want so that you can carry it out. *This* is the meaning of life. If you have tasted it, you know what I

mean, and you're like a boy with a great big watermelon who's had a slice of it and it's luscious and he knows what he wants, he wants another slice of that same melon.

I know what I want, my friends. I want to know more of that love of Jesus, my dear friends. Not merely by receiving it, but by reflecting it; not merely by having it, but by giving it. What do you say, friends? "I have chosen you," He says.

Oh, my brother, my sister, young or old, I wish I could speak to each of you personally, take your hand and say, "Do you know this experience with Jesus? Is He this to you? Do you know that you are this to Him? Has the quest of your soul been realized? Have you found that fellowship with Him, which satisfies the heart longing?" If you have, I know your heart goes out with mine this morning for more and more of the same thing.

But, oh, if you have not—if you have attempted to satisfy at earthly cisterns the thirst of your soul, you know that it never really, truly, permanently, satisfies. Come to the living waters. Come to the fountain of love. Come to the heart of Jesus. He died for you upon the cross that your sins might be forgiven, that every barrier that separates you from Him might be taken away. Come, kneel at that cross. Give Him your love—*all* of it. Ask Him to give you His love—*all* of it. He will. This satisfies. This is the meaning of life.

Shall we kneel together? And just now where you're kneeling, may you have an individual fellowship with Jesus. Forget this audience. Just open up the heart to the Savior. As you see Him at the door, as you hear His gentle knock, run to open that door, run to put your arms around Him and feel His arms around you. Ask Him in. Tell Him you want it to be forever. That's the only thing can satisfy Him. That's the only thing can satisfy you.

Yes, precious Lord, come in and abide with us forever. With joy, we give Thee Thy rightful place in our hearts. We give Thee our love—all of it—and we thank Thee in that dear name, amen.

Now, I would like to ask a question before we sing our closing song, which is Hymn #594 [old hymnal].

"I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice,
And it told Thy love to me,
But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
And be closer drawn to Thee."

But now, this question, before we sing. Is there somebody here this morning that has never known before—you might be a church member, you might not—that isn't what I'm talking about. But somehow this morning, as God has spoken to your heart, you realize that here is an experience that you've never had, but this morning you reach out to receive it and to share it with Jesus.

If there's somebody like that, I'd like to have you stand. If this hour is your time to seal this decision with Christ that you shall be all His, as He is all yours. If there's somebody like that here?

Another question, is there somebody that has once known this love, but something got in between you and Him. The moon quits shining when the world gets square between it and the sun. You know that, don't you? You've seen these eclipses when the moon quit shining.

And if the world has gotten in between you and the lovely face of Jesus, you've lost your light. Is there's somebody here this morning that Jesus has spoken to, and you know something has come between you and the Savior, and this morning you're putting it out of the way for His dear sake, will you stand? Somebody that Jesus spoke to about something that has marred that fellowship, hindered... just remain standing a moment brother. God bless your life!

Is there somebody else? Yes, brother, and you remain standing a moment while the Lord speaks to somebody else's heart and somebody else responds. You dear men are precious to the Lord and I know He's precious to you.

Is there another that says, "yes," this is for me this morning. God bless you both, children. Jesus loves you. He tells us—listen, children—that nothing can give Him greater joy than for children to give themselves to Him in the morning of their years. God bless you!

Is there another, young or old, that says, "yes," Jesus calls me this morning and my heart says, "yes, I will." He gave *all* for me. I will give *all* for Him.

Shall we stand. Turn to hymn #594 [old hymnal, in the new hymnal it is #306]. Remember tonight at 7:30 we're going on with this survival series. Notice each word of these four beautiful stanzas.

I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice,
And it told Thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
And be closer drawn to Thee.

Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side.

Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord,
By the power of grace divine;
May my soul look up with a steadfast hope
And my will be lost in Thine.

Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,

To Thy precious, bleeding side.

O the pure delight of a single hour
That before Thy throne I spend;
When I keel in prayer, and with Thee, my God,
I commune as friend with friend!

Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side.

There are depths of love that I cannot know,
Till I cross the narrow sea,
There are heights of joy that I may not reach,
Till I rest in peace with Thee.

Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side.

[Brother from the congregation prays]: Gracious Lord, we have heard Thy voice. We're conscious of Thy power. We appreciate to have it reviewed to us by wonderful love. Father, we're ashamed that we have not responded as fully as we might in showing our love by loving one another and loving those who are outside the fold. O, God, increase our love, increase our faith!

May we recognize that the journey is almost ended, and Father, we pray that we may walk carefully, lovingly, tenderly. May that love be demonstrated *every moment* in our homes, to our children, to one another in the family. May father demonstrate it with his wife, and wife back to husband, that we may know, that the world may know, that we are Thy children, that we are only pilgrims, that we're soon going home.

And so, father, take us by the hand, direct us, and may we be obedient in following for Jesus' sake with us. Amen.

Copyright 2019. All rights reserved.

W.D. Frazee Sermons
PO Box 129, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org