

Pecking Order

#0006

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 10, 1976

I would like to have you turn to 2 Peter 1:10.

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” Peter 1:10.

See if you can find a word in here that belongs to this particular date on the calendar. What is it? Election. This is election day. Now, what's the next word? Sure. That doesn't belong to the election that the returns will be on the headlines and newspapers in the morning. The people who are contending for office today, many of them are not very sure of the outcome. But I want to study with you a sure election. I want you to be elected.

I'm not thinking of the great election to the kingdom of God, I'm thinking of something closer, something nearer, and that is being sure that you are in the position of God's choice right here in this world. You know, dear friends, I have a settled assurance in my heart tonight that if the Lord wanted me to be the Governor of this state, He could arrange it and would arrange it. I don't think He does, in fact, I'm sure He doesn't. Do you know why? He's given me something more important to do, that is more important for *me*, you understand. I am not depreciating the work of the Governor; I couldn't do what he's doing. But he couldn't do what I'm doing either.

I have the settled assurance in my heart that my election is sure. I don't have to worry about it. Nobody can take my position, and I don't want anybody else's position. You are looking at a happy man. And I want everybody here to be just as happy.

Now it's an interesting thing how little it takes to make people concerned, or restless over this matter of position. Have you heard of the pecking order in the barnyard? Cows, a group of them are together, there's a pecking order they tell me. I haven't looked into it, but I have an idea of what they are talking about.

Have you ever watched birds? My wife and I watch them on the feeder sometimes. A certain bird will come and another one will come, maybe even of the same species, and that other bird will get out of the way fast. Do you know why? Well, the other bird must be a little bigger or a little more aggressive or something and the other bird is higher on the pecking order.

You've heard the expression “low man on the totem pole”? All right. Now you have heard me point out before that the early apostles were perfectly willing, apparently, to leave their jobs and their homes and follow Jesus around, and

sometimes be hungry and sleep out in the parks or in the woods. They were perfectly willing to do that. They still had a problem over this thing of the pecking order. For three years, Jesus tried to help them with this thing. And they flunked the final examination. I shouldn't say final, thank God it wasn't final, but it was certainly a semester examination. It was at the end of three years and when they got into that upper room, the Bible says there was a strife among them as to which should be the greatest. See Luke 22:24.

Now I suggest to you that while it is important to learn the lesson of humility and meekness and resignation and all that, there's a deeper lesson in this. This is what I want you to think of tonight. A deeper lesson. And that's this lesson: that there is no higher place in the universe than the place you belong. And that nobody in this world can keep you from being there except you. You can keep from being there. You can miss it. But if you are willing, nothing in this world can keep you—no man, no committee, no board, you don't have to pace the floor wondering what's going to happen, no. Your heavenly Father is in charge.

“...Make your calling and election sure” 2 Peter 1:10.

Thank God, I know I am going to be elected. I know I've been called, and I know I'm going to be elected. In fact, I have been elected.

“Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God” *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 327.

Why, you hear about people that because they're not filling a position as high as they think they are capable of or as they see somebody else filling, they want to go off and get this course or that course or this recognition, or that recognition. What for? You will allow me to put it very plainly: so they can be higher in the pecking order, you understand. Higher on the totem pole.

Dear friends, that's Babylon. That's not Zion. That didn't come from Heaven, that came from the other place. It isn't the way to be happy. It's the way to be unhappy. The way to be restless.

Now don't misunderstand me; we all want to learn more and do better, but not so that we'll get more recognition and more position and more prestige and more remuneration. No, no! In fact, if any of those things are moving you, you are in the wrong place to start with. This isn't it; you're just losing time here. Absolutely. This is going in a different direction. The way is going to get narrower, it's going to get more rugged, it's going to get more sacrificial, it's going to get less popular. There's going to be less prestige instead of more, less remuneration.

Well, why would anybody come then? Some people have heard the call of love, the call of the cross, and the Man *on* the cross, and they're happy to share that with Jesus.

“And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not” Jeremiah 45:5.

Jeremiah gave this text to his assistant. The Lord gave it to him for his assistant; Baruch was the man's name. He was Jeremiah's secretary. He was his assistant. And if Baruch had had a spirit that didn't appreciate this, he might have said, "Well, I know what's the matter with Jeremiah, he just wants to hold me down. He wants to get all there is out of me, but he doesn't want to give anything. He wants to do the directing and just have me take the orders." But you will notice that this message wasn't from Jeremiah, it was from the Lord.

“Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus;
Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that
which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land”
Jeremiah 45:4

He's talking about the destruction of Jerusalem.

“And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not” Jeremiah 45:5.

Oh, but isn't it a wonderful thing to be ambitious? It is if you want to win the Olympics, get a fleeting crown of laurel in the Grecian games or something like that. Yes, you better be ambitious even to the place where it will cause the blood to run from your nostrils and you'll fall down dead just before you get the prize. But this isn't the Christian race. Oh no.

“Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not”
Jeremiah 45:5.

Now let's see why not to do that. What is it we're studying about tonight? An election *sure*. The sure election. This is it.

“For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another” Psalm 75:6–7.

"Oh, I want Him to set me up." He just might, but He might set you down. He sets up the people He loves and He sets down the people He doesn't love. Or is that in the Bible? No, I didn't read that in the Bible. I just said what some people seem to think.

Here is Joseph. He's down there in Potiphar's house. What is he? A slave. That's right. He is a slave. What's the matter? Doesn't the Lord love him? Does the Lord love Joseph? Oh yes. Now, after ten years, he gets promoted. Promotion, it says here, goes not from the east or the west or the south, but God is the judge. Did Joseph get promoted? Where did he get promoted to? The dungeon.

My dear friends, the psalmist says, “Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron.” Psalm 105:18. He was not merely confined, he was hurt. His heart

must have been hurt too. But thank God he kept his faith and he got busy trying to help the other prisoners. That's what finally got him out.

Oh, I just long that you and I shall fully learn the lesson of letting God run our lives. Let me read it to you out of this matchless book, *Ministry of Healing*, page 477. You know, *Ministry of Healing* is more than a book for the sick on how to get well, and for the well on how to keep healthy. It's all that. But it is a *textbook* for medical missionary workers in how to solve their own problems and how to let God use them to solve the problems of others.

"While the shepherds were watching their flocks on the hills of Bethlehem, angels from heaven visited them. So today, while the humble worker for God is following his employment, angels of God stand by his side, listening to his words, noting the manner in which his work is done, to see if larger responsibilities may be entrusted to his hands" *Ministry of Healing*, page 477.

Who is around on this campus? In our rooms? Offices? Shops? Homes? Who's going around with a checklist? The angels of God. Do you know what they're looking for? Oh, they're looking for those to whom Heaven can entrust larger responsibilities. Do you know why I am studying this with you tonight? I'll tell you why, friends. I'll just open up my heart and tell you why.

My soul was blessed but also burdened by the meetings over the weekend. Did any of you have your heart wrung as you heard Brother Wayne Dull last Friday night tell of those experiences in the great flood on the big Thompson? Did it reach your heart? And then Saturday night as Bill and Lois Dull told us of the needy millions in New York City and the efforts that are being made to reach them. Did it reach your heart? And then Sunday night as Doctor Lukins pictured in his simple, humble, sincere graphic way the needs there in Africa, did it reach your heart?

Oh friends, I went home ashamed of my own slowness and selfishness and littleness. I want to let God use me wherever He can in whatever capacity the best possible. Don't you? And let me tell something: we could start *twice* as many places as we've got if we only had the workers.

"Well," somebody says, "I'm ready. I'm willing." Well, Moses thought he was ready and the Lord said, "Well, Moses, I'll take you but I'll have to retrain you." So He sent him to the University of Midian, you remember. And he took the medical missionary course. Did you know that? Let me see if I can find it here. *Ministry of Healing*, page 474. Speaking of Moses, "He learned to nurse."

I didn't make that up. I just read it right here on the last two lines of page 474. That's what it says. There was even a geriatric department which some people don't like at all, but it was in the course. It says so, you can read it there. There was some obstetrics and pediatrics, too. You can read that; it's all there.

My point is, Moses, after a few months, could probably say, "Well, I've mastered this. I'm ready to go on now to something else." No. God said, "No, not

yet.” And for 20 years, Moses kept that up and then God said, “You’re all ready.” What? You mean it took 30 years? No, no. Forty.

Now somebody may be saying, “Well, Brother Frazee, we don’t have that much time.” Well, that’s all the more reason we’d better get busy fast and learn our lessons. What do you say? Not skip them! God, save us! Not skip them! Dear friends, if we’re going to join in the song of Moses, we’d better learn the lessons that Moses learned taking the medical missionary training there. It’s true, he worked on sheep instead of people. There probably weren’t that many sick people around those days, but you and I don’t have to hunt up a shepherd’s job; there are plenty of *people* that need it. But they’re sick, and they’re old, or they’re young, they’re weak. Read the description here. Just get down on your knees and read it, friends, and ask God to help us to have eyes that see and ears that hear the cry—the cry of woe.

When we hear Lois talk about those lonely voices calling, it makes us weep. But ah, dear ones, does that actual cry, spoken or unspoken, does that make us respond? As I say, I long to learn my lessons quickly. And if I can see fully that God has my training, my development in full charge, then you can see I won’t need to be burdened with restlessness in trying to push myself out of a difficult problem or a monotonous round of duty. But I will cheerfully and willingly let God manage my life.

Let me read you a very interesting little statement from the magazine *Signs of the Times*, March 9, 1888. The prophet to the remnant is writing:

“If we are capable of a larger service” *The Signs of the Times*, March 9, 1888.

Larger than what? Larger than what we are doing.

“If we are capable of a larger service, a more important work, the Lord knows all about it, and it is His work to lift us up” *Ibid.*

That’s what we just read in Psalms, isn’t it? Here it puts it right down in modern English.

“If we are capable of a larger service, a more important work, the Lord knows all about it, and it is His work to lift us up. How thankful we should be that we are not burdened with the responsibility of estimating our own ability, and choosing our own place and position” *Ibid.*

Now, this thought is to make us how? Thankful. And thankful people are happy people. The way to be happy is to fully accept the fact, it isn’t fiction, it is reality, that you and I are not given the job of estimating our own ability and choosing our own place and position.

Now, this thought is to make it *how*? I need to read it again, you didn’t get the word. That’s my fault. I’ll mend the fault; I’ll repeat it. Now listen carefully:

“How thankful we should be that we are not burdened with the responsibility of estimating our own ability, and choosing our own place and position” *Ibid.*

This is to make us what? Thankful. And thankful people are happy people.

The way to be happy is to fully accept the fact it isn't fiction, it's reality, that you and I are not given the job of estimating our own ability or choosing our own place or position. Oh friends, I'm thankful for this. What do you say? Isn't it a blessed relief?

You know, one of the greatest men in Jerusalem during the ministry of Christ was Nicodemus. He was a member of the council of the 70. Tradition has it that he was the richest man in Jerusalem. He was hesitant and slow about publicly accepting the Savior, but he came forward the day Christ was crucified and joined in with the church.

And they made him president of the General Conference. What? Well, at least they made him treasurer of the General Conference. What? Do you even read about him in the book of Acts? No. But you can find in the Spirit of Prophecy the fact that he poured his wealth into that early church led by that band of poor fishermen and gladly followed the lead of those men that God had appointed and anointed until it left him poor and despised.

Oh friends, he had already had the position, but gladly he left it and lost it. Then think of Paul on the Damascus road, another member of the Sanhedrin. Another one of the 70. The Lord said, “I want you, Paul.” I'm going to show you what great things you must suffer for My sake. He used up all his wealth in the service of Christ. He lost all his position. He became poor, despised, persecuted, and finally lost his life.

But it was all right. He had found something. He knew that Jesus had given everything for him, and he wanted to give everything for Jesus. Wasn't your heart touched the other night as that young man with his three degrees told us how God took him from a lark to go skiing on to getting burdened with the needs of those poor people over there in one of the dark places of the earth? Wasn't your heart touched by that?

But friend, he wouldn't trade what he's got now for all the ski larks in the world, would he? No.

I had a precious time with him this morning. We sought the Lord together in prayer. Out tears mingled as we knelt at the throne of grace. God has put His hand on that young man. Some other people like him are going to catch the same virus he's got. Oh, I pray that as God leads them in, they won't find a single one of you and me little folks intent on getting our proper position in the pecking order.

I hope men that have been called of God and will be called of God to sacrifice the wealth and position that the world counts something as more and more of them hear the call and come among us. I hope they'll find in every one of us; whether we

wash dishes, sweep floors, give treatments, write prescriptions, hoe corn, or whatever, I hope they'll find in every one of us the same cheerful willingness to do the job that needs to be done without any thought of where it's going to lead us in promotion.

Promotion? Promoted to the dungeon. Promoted to the caves. But someday when *Jesus* comes, He holds out those wounded hands and says:

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"
Matthew 25:34.

Back to *Ministry of Healing*, page 477:

"If any are qualified for a higher position, the Lord will lay the burden, not alone on them, but on those who have tested them, who know their worth, and who can understandingly urge them forward" *Ministry of Healing*, page 477.

Did you ever see somebody take little balls and start putting them up in the air and catching them as they come down? Have you ever seen somebody that could keep three or four in the air and keep catching them and throwing them up? Once I saw a man that could keep seven going. There may be people that can keep more, I don't know, but I would say that was the perfect number.

Listen, dear friends, how foolish it is to cry for more when we can't even take care of what we've got. Isn't it? And so I want to ask you something. Are you compassing what God has given you? Or is that a good question? Wouldn't it be a strange thing to think, "If I only had more to do, I could do it better than what I'm doing with this"? Isn't that a strange reason? It's not only theological, it's unbiblical.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much" Luke 16:10.

May I suggest, dear ones, if the particular job you have is something that isn't quite filling your time and talent, there are two things I wish you'd do for Jesus' sake and your own development. First, reach out your hand to your supervisor. Everybody has one. Somebody that you're supposed to be helping. Reach out your hand to your supervisor and say, "Brother, or Sister, is there something more I can do to help you? I believe I can handle what I'm responsible for and take a little more. Let me take some of your load."

My, wouldn't that make nice music better than anything we hear from up here? And my other suggestion is this. If you find yourself capable of caring for what has been entrusted to you, along with this other suggestion, look around you and ask God to help you to find some weaker one that you can assist. Some fellow student, or some fellow worker, somebody that because they are especially tired today, or because they were sick last week and haven't quite recuperated, or

whatever the reason, are under a special load. Angels will guide you to those who need your help. Angels will fill your mouth with words of kindness and courage.

“...Make your calling and election sure” 2 Peter 1:10.

To follow these simple, yet tremendous principles we’ve studied anew tonight makes positive that we will fill the position of God’s choice today, and tomorrow, and forever. Thank God.

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