

**Pastor Paul Bawden  
Grace Evangelical Church  
Sunday, June 20, 2010  
Father's Day  
"Chosen For God's Glory"  
Ezekiel 16**

All of us make different choices each day. Some of those choices we make without even giving much thought. Other choices may take a bit more thought.

Former President Ronald Reagan tells his story about the need to make choices. An aunt had taken him to the shoe cobbler to have a pair of shoes made for him. The shoe maker asked Reagan if he wanted a round toe or a square toe. Reagan couldn't make up his mind so the cobbler told him to come back in a day or two and let him know his decision. Reagan came back a few days later, and the shoemaker asked him if he had made up his mind about the kind of shoes he wanted, a square toe or a round toe. "Very well," replied the cobbler."

When Reagan came back to get his new shoes, he was shocked to find that one of his shoes was a square toe and one was a round toe.

Reagan said years later that incident taught him a lesson that he must make his decision or someone else will make it for you.

One of the biggest choices that a person will make is the choice to become married – a man and woman to be joined as one in the marriage union.

Ferra had a plaque on above our kitchen sink once which read:

**Choose Thy Love.  
Love Thy Choice.**

Beautiful words.

Words that remind us that we have the freedom to make choices in life, particularly in regard to the one a person marries.

These words also tell us that love is a choice. Love is not just a feeling, but a deliberate action that a man and woman make to each other to be committed to each other in the marriage relationship.

The couple committed to each other in love continues to love in the challenging times and the good times.

Love is certainly a choice. Love is a commitment.

**And the one who has demonstrated that reality ultimately, is the biblical God.**

**In fact in our text today in Ezekiel 16, God used Ezekiel to talk about His love to the people of Israel who were in captivity in Babylon around 590 B.C.**

**In doing so, God used Ezekiel to tell Israel that His relationship with His people was like a marriage.**

**Note how Ezekiel develops this analogy of God's relationship as a Husband with Israel His wife.**

**I. God's relationship with His people Israel (Ezekiel 16:1-14).**

**1. God made a choice (Ezekiel 16:1-7)**

Note 16:8b. He chose Israel, not because of their size, but because He loved Abraham.

## **2. God loved Israel (Ezekiel 16:8-14).**

Note 16:8a Loving the nation of Israel God tied Himself to His people He loved. In one sense, it was like a marriage.

## **3. Israel became unfaithful (Ezekiel 16:15-34).**

Israel broke God's law and went into idolatry even offering their children in sacrifice to false gods.

## **4. God had to discipline Israel (Ezekiel 16:35-52).**

This had already taken place in 722 B.C. when Assyria took the northern kingdom captive. Then Babylon took the southern kingdom captive in 606 B.C, 597 B.C. (when Ezekiel was taken captive). The final deportation by the Babylonians would be in 586 B.C.

## **5. God will reconcile Israel to Himself. (Ezekiel 16:53-63).**

This occurred historical in 536 B. C. when Cyrus made the decree for those in captivity in Babylon to return to Jerusalem. The temple and walls of Jerusalem were finally rebuilt, but Israel never had their God-given place in the world. Even at the time of Christ, Israel was ruled by the Romans. Eventually in A.D 70 Titus came and destroyed the city. Amazingly in 1948, Israel became a recognized as a state and given some of the real estate promised to Abraham. Still, Israel does not have the land promised to them. But when Christ returns at the end of the tribulation time, Israel will turn to the Lord, and the nation will be given all of its land. They will be spiritually reconciled to the Lord and reign with the Lord in the millennium.

## **II. God's relationship with His Church (believers in Christ - Ephesians 1:3-6).**

### **1. God chose us (Ephesians 1:4).**

### **2. God loves us (Ephesians 1:4; Romans 5:8; John 3:16; I John 4:10).**

**According to Ephesians 5 the church is the bride of the husband, Jesus Christ.**

### **3. We can become unfaithful (Ephesians 4:29-31; Hebrews 12:15-16; I Corinthians 3:3).**

### **4. God has to discipline us (Hebrews 12:7-11)**

### **5. God reconciles us when we confess our sin to Him (I John 1:9).**

## **III. The summary of God's loving choice.**

### **1. We are in a desperate condition apart from Christ.**

**Romans 1:18-32; 3:9-18.**

### **2. Without God's loving choice no eternal relationship with Jesus Christ.**

**Includes His mercy and grace (I John 4:10).**

\*\*God made His loving choice in eternity past (Ephesians 1:4).

\*\*God always takes the initiative in making that loving choice.

\*\*His love was and is unconditional.

\*\*His love was not based upon any merit (Romans. 5:8 – we were sinners).

\*\*God's love was based upon His own character (For Israel that eternal Abrahamic Covenant, of which we are a part through faith in Christ as well as the New Covenant).

### **3. God's loving choice of us is to bless us (Ephesians 1:3-14).**

That's what God did with Israel (Ezekiel 16:14). We are not promised a piece of real estate as Israel was, and will still occupy fully piece of property during the millennium.

Rather we are promised spiritual blessings. Those are already given to the believer and experienced as each believer in Christ takes God at His Word and acts upon it.

We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3ff; I Peter 1:3-9).

### **4. God's loving choice is to bless us because He delights in us (Psalm 23:6; Jeremiah 32:40-41; Zephaniah 3:17).**

**Psalm 23:6** – "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

**Jeremiah 32:40-41**, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them; I will never stop doing good to them. I will rejoice in doing them good and surely plant them in this land with all my heart and soul."

Of course that is to yet happen with the nation of Israel when Christ returns at the end of the tribulation time.

We now as believers in Jesus Christ are blessed with His spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ, and have the very law of God written in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us (part of the New Covenant – (Hebrews 8:8-13)).

**Zephaniah 3:17** summarizes God's delight in Israel and in us, "The LORD your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy. He will be quiet in His love. He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy."

In one of my Bibles, I have this verse marked. It was a number of years ago in my first time on a medical/mission trip to Romania. Pastor Clintoc of Romania gave our team that verse on our last evening together before coming back to the United States. Pastor Clintoc was a man who knew the Lord personally and had been through much for Him. God was a victorious warrior and exulted over him with joy.

Pastor Clintoc knew that God had made a loving choice of Him and delighted in him. Pastor Clintoc delighted in the Lord as well.

I understand that Mark Hayes has adapted lyrics from Zephaniah 3:14-17.

These verse in historical context look forward to the nation of Israel's restoration to her land under Christ's millennial reign yet to come on earth.

But the principle is here. Since God has chosen us in His love, He delights in us.

### **AND THE FATHER WILL DANCE**

**Words Zephaniah 3:14,17, Psalm 34:2,4; Music by [Mark Hayes](#).**

And the Father will dance over you in joy !He will take delight in whom He loves. Is that a choir I hear, singing the praises of God? No, the Lord God Himself is exulting o'er you in song! And He will joy over you in song; And He will joy over you in song.

My soul will make its boast in God, For He has answered all my cries, His faithfulness in me is as sure as the dawn of a new day. Awake my soul! Awake, my soul, and sing! Let my spirit rejoice, Let my spirit rejoice, Let my spirit rejoice in God! Sing, O daughter of Zion, with all of your heart!

Cast away fear for you have been restored! Put on the garment of praise as on a festival day. Join with the Father in glorious, jubilant song! And He will joy over you in song; And He will joy over you in song. And the Father will dance over you in joy! He will take delight in whom He loves. Is that a choir I hear, singing the praises of God? No, the Lord God Himself is exulting o'er you in song! God rejoices over you. God rejoices over you, God rejoices over you in song!

**What a thought is that, that God, our heavenly Father rejoices over us with shouts of joy**

**This tells us how valuable we are to God. How significant we are to God. We are His eternal possession, His eternal property.**

**When all is against us, when all seems negative. Yes, when the kids throw up, or the dishwasher breaks down. When the children won't obey. When a check bounces or one loses one's job, or a business deal fails.**

**God is still rejoicing over you.**

**This is great reminder for our fathers today on this Father's Day. Regardless of what you may be experiencing negatively, God, your heavenly Father is for you and rejoices over you. He tells you to hang in there for He is working out His will for you.**

**John Piper in his book, "The Pleasures of God," expresses how God delights in us and desires to do us good.** In fact, Hebrews 2:12 seems to indicate that the Lord Jesus sits with the heavenly congregation. The Lord inhabits praise.

## **John Piper pens, “What do you hear when you imagine the voice of God singing? Here is what Piper writes:**

“I hear the booming of Niagara Falls mingled with the trickle of a mossy mountain stream. I hear the blast of the Mt. St. Helens mingled with a kitten’s purr. I hear the power of an East Coast Hurricane and the barely audible puff of a night snow in the woods. And I hear the unimaginable roar of the sun, 865,000 miles thick, 1,300,000 times bigger than the earth, and nothing but fire., 1,000,000 degrees centigrade on the cooler surface of the corona. But I hear this unimaginable roar mingle with the tender, warm crackling of logs in the living room on a cozy winter’s night.

“I stand dumbfounded, staggered, speechless that He is singing over me – one who has dishonored Him so many times and in so many ways. It is almost too good to be true. He is rejoicing over my good with all His heart and all His soul. He virtually breaks forth into song when He hits upon a new way to do me good.”

That’s something to reflect upon this week in our personal walk with the Lord.

### **5. The reality is that many times we don’t delight in the Lord (James 1:5-12; 4:1-3; Matthew 6:25).**

That’s what happened to Israel (Ezekiel 16:15).

“But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries one very passer-by who might be willing.”

Instead of delighting in the LORD, Israel started delighting in God’s many blessings. She thus became unthankful for those blessings, forgetting, and ignoring the Source of her blessings.

God warned Israel of this happening in Deuteronomy 8:10-18. They followed God’s warning for awhile but eventually took God’s blessings for granted and engaged in idolatry and immorality ignored God’s teachings in His Word.

The same can happen for us today as followers of Christ. God’s blessings can be taken for granted and we can become very apathetic in our relationship with the Lord. We go through the motions of Christian disciplines, but we have little passion for our Lord in knowing Him and doing His will.

We start trusting in our own wisdom. We become double minded. We fail to give thanks. We take for granted what we have if we are not careful (James 1:5-12). Sometimes we ask the Lord for things for the wrong reasons. Sometimes, we love our possessions and things more than the Lord.

### **6. God, then, disciplines us so we will return to Him, asking His forgiveness and engage in passionate service for HIM (Hebrews 12:5-11).**

That’s what, as we mentioned above, happens as described in Hebrews 12:5-11. We must let the Holy Spirit convict us of our sin, confess that to the Lord, and go on in enthusiastic service for HIM. show off His character in our daily lives by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

### **7. God’s ultimate desire is that we participate in a greater way in His holiness for His glory (Hebrews 12:11-15, Ephesians 1:6,12, 14).**

That’s why God chose the nation Israel, to glorify Him. The nation, as we considered, become disobedient, and glorified themselves. God set them aside for awhile, and will one day bring the nation back to Himself, and the nation will truly glorify the LORD in the millennial time.

Right now God is working with the church, you and I who know Christ as personal Savior. He has chosen us so that we would be to the praise of the glory of His Grace. That we would be trophies of His Grace – give evidence that we belong to Him and He belongs to us. Yes, at times, He may have to discipline us. But God’s desire for each of us is that we grow to be more like him, experience His holiness in a greater way, to the glory of God.

Note Ephesians 1: 6: To the praise of the glory of His grace.

Ephesians 1:12 – to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 1:14 – To the praise of His glory.

If you know the Lord as your personal Savior, praise the Lord that He has chosen you for His glory.

**Yes, as believers in Jesus Christ, we will be trophies of His grace for all eternity to the praise of His glory!**

**And Dad, if you know Christ as Savior, God, your heavenly Father, has chosen you not just to be trophy of His grace, but also He has chosen you to represent Him to your children, and to your wife.**

**Yes, to show your love to your children with integrity and truth. To show your delight in your children, that you believe in them and are for them --To invest your life in them. And above all pray for them on a daily basis for God's guidance and protection from the evil one.**

**Certainly there will be challenges. But God will give you the grace and strength to be the Dad He wants you to be.**

**Let's thank the Lord that He has chosen each of us to be a trophy of His grace!!**