

CAN YOU REJOICE IN ELECTING LOVE?

JOHN 15:16 • TV089B

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John 15:16

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”

Now here’s the title of the message this morning: **“CAN YOU REJOICE IN ELECTING LOVE?”**

Now, some of you are going to be greatly blessed by this message. Some of you are going to be troubled by it. Some of you may even find yourself confused by the message that I’m going to bring.

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But I want you to listen to me. Will you listen for a little while? Open your Bible please to **John chapter 15** and let me read for you the first **verse 16**. Let's read **verse 16 of John chapter 15**. And the subject; keep it in mind: "**CAN YOU REJOICE IN ELECTING LOVE?**"

Now, Christ said to His disciples: "*You have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth much fruit (so shall ye be my disciples) that your fruit should remain that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*"

Now, the Master had eaten the Passover Supper with His disciples and He had washed the disciple's feet and He instituted the Lord's Table. He had given them the broken bread saying: "*This is my body which is broken for you.*" And He had given them the wine saying: "*This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for many.*"

And Judas had gone out to bargain with the priest to betray his Lord. And our Master had said to His disciples: "*Arise and let us go hence.*" He was going toward the Garden of Gethsemane where He prayed. But as He walked along with His disciples you will find Him talking to them beginning with **verse 1 of John 15**. He points out several things.

First of all: He tells them this; our relationship is a living union; our relationship is a living union. "*I am the vine and ye are the branches. Abide in me, for without me you can do nothing.*"

Christ is saying to His disciples, this relationship between me and you is a whole lot more than just a religious affiliation. It's a whole lot more than a group of men being in a denomination or in a religious doctrine or even a religious profession. This relationship between me and you, is a living union like the vine and the branches. "*I'm the vine and you are the branches.*"

Now, apart from Christ you have no life, just like the branches; you apart from the vine have no life in yourselves. The life is in the vine. That's where the strength is, that's where the nourishment is, and that's where the life is.

The vine gives life to the branches. If the branches are severed from the vine, separated from the vine, the vine goes on living but the branches are withered and dead and men soon cast them into the fire.

And Christ said, "*Even so you, if you abide in me you have life. If you abide not in me you are dead like withered branches. Without me you can do nothing.*" And this is the relationship between the Lord Jesus and His people. It's a living union. It's a vital and living union.

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But all the strength and all the life and all the nourishment comes from Christ. He is our life. The Scripture says that: *“When Christ who is our life shall appear; then shall ye appear with him in glory. Christ in you; that’s the hope of glory.”* He comes and brings life. He comes and brings a new nature. He comes and brings divine life, you see.

He says in another place that our relationship with Him is like a head and a body. Christ is the head and we are the body. And again He tells us this; that our relationship with Him is that living relationship that He has with the Father.

He said: *“The Father in me, I in them, and thou in me.”* It’s the same as the blessed Trinity. You can’t divide the Trinity; the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one. And Christ and His people are one: *“I in them and thou in me.”* Do you see that?

So here they are walking along going toward Gethsemane’s Garden and going toward the cross when He was to die for their sins, and going to the grave, and then the resurrection. He is talking to them and saying to them; *“Our relationship; it’s not just a profession. It’s not just a ceremonial or doctrinal position; it’s a living, vital, union.” “I in them and thou in me. I am the vine and you are the branches.”*

Secondly: And He says down here in **verses 9 through 12**; He says: *“Our relationship is one of love.”*

Listen to Him; *“As the Father loves me, so I love you.”* How much does the Father love His Son? Have you ever thought about that? *“My Father loves me,”* Christ said. How much does God love His Son?

Well, He loves Him immutably, everlastingly, unchangeably, infinitely; just keep going. *“Even so, I love you.”* That’s the love Christ has for His people, an infinite love. *“Having loved his own he loved them to the end.”* He loved them even to the death of the cross.

“Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.” But Christ laid down His life for His enemies. We were His enemies. He loved us when we were enemies. *“He committed his love toward us even while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*

And He goes on and says: *“Now, I love you like my Father loves me, I love you and you will continue in my love.”* Now look down at **verse 12**: *“This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you.”*

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So, I will tell you, this thing of Christianity, this thing of salvation is a whole lot more than just joining a local church.

It's a whole lot more than just going through some ritual and getting a little water sprinkled on your brow or later on in life getting immersed beneath some water, you know, and joining the church and getting elected to be a deacon or a Sunday school teacher or singing a little or leading a song or going through the motions.

This thing of salvation and this is what Christ tells His disciples: "Our relationship is a living union. Our relationship is one of love." *"By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another. And if any man love not his brother whom he hath seen; how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"*

And the Scripture says: *"If any man say that he loves God and hates his brother; he's a liar and the truth is not in him."* God said that. So you see; Christ is speaking to these disciples and He is defining redemption. He's defining salvation. He's defining what they are and where they are positionally.

Thirdly: He says, "Our relationship, the relationship between Me and you; it's a living, vital, union. It's a love relationship and it's a familiar family union."

Now; listen to Him, He says in **verse 15**: *"I call you not servants."* The servant is not informed concerning the master's counsel, will, or purpose. The servant just blindly carries out orders.

His master, tells the servant to do something and he does it. He doesn't know why he's doing it. He doesn't know why his master wants him to do it. He doesn't know what his master's purpose is.

He doesn't know what the object and goal of his master is; he just blindly carries out orders. But not the Son, you see; He said: *"I didn't call you servants; I called you friends."* Because He said; "I have revealed to you the secrets of my Father. I have revealed to you the mysteries of my Father."

Over in **Luke chapter 10:23 and 24** there is an interesting verse of Scripture. Listen to it if you will, **Luke 10:23**: Christ turned to His disciples and He said to them privately; *"Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. Blessed are the ears to hear the things that you hear."*

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“For I tell you that many prophets and many kings have desired to see those things which you see and have not seen and have desired to hear those things which you have heard, and they have not heard them. Blessed are your eyes they see and your ears they hear.”

He said; “I call you not servants. I call you friends because a servant doesn’t know his master’s counsel and his master’s will and his master’s purpose. But I’ve brought you, my friend into the secret counsel halls of God. And I’ve shown you the wisdom and power of God in redemption. I’ve shown you the mysteries of the Gospel.”

“If our Gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ should shine unto them and they should be saved.”

But God hath revealed them. God hath shown them. God hath manifested the light. He hath opened our hearts and shone the glorious Gospel of His glory in the face of Christ Jesus in our hearts. Thank God, He says; “I’ve revealed to you the counsel and the will and the wisdom and the purpose of my Father.” That’s salvation. That’s this relationship.

As this man Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, our Lord and Saviour, our great Redeemer walks along with these 11 men, these 11 precious believers and He tells them; He says: “There’s a living relationship between us. *‘I’m the vine and you are the branches.’* There’s a love relationship between us. There’s a family relationship between us.”

And then He brings out a most humbling and blessed truth. He looks at them and He says: *“But you did not choose me. (Don’t get high and lifted up, proud and conceited, egotistical and haughty). You didn’t choose me; I chose you.”*

That’s humbling isn’t it? It’s humbling to think that Christ is the Light and *“we love darkness rather than light because our deeds are evil.”* It’s humbling to know that Christ the great Shepherd says to Israel, *“How oft would I gather you unto myself as a hen that gathereth her brood but you would not?”*

It’s humbling to think that Christ is the Bread and starving men had rather eat the husk of the swine than go to Christ. It’s astounding and humbling to know that Christ is the precious, clear, crystal clear, water of life, and yet, we would rather drink from the infested, corrupted cistern’s of this world than to drink from Him.

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But that's the nature of man. That's the mess we're in. We call bitter "sweet" and sweet "bitter." We call light "darkness" and darkness "light." We call life "death" and death "life." We call good "evil" and evil "good."

We are Christian warped, converted, and yet we don't understand: *"There's none that understandeth."* That's humbling. We didn't choose Him. He chose us. How blessed it is to know.

He chose us though. He didn't leave us alone. He could have passed us by but He didn't. He could have left us alone but He didn't: *"Herein is love, not that we love him but that he loved us. We love him because he first loved us."* That's what He says: *"You have not chosen me; I chose you."*

My friend; I rejoice in God's electing love. I like that old song written several hundred years ago:

**"Tis not that I did choose thee
For Lord that could not be,
This heart would still refuse thee
But thou hast chosen me."**

He could have passed me by but He didn't. He could have left me in my darkness but He didn't. He could have justly condemned me but He didn't. And He could have done the same thing to these disciples but He didn't.

He said all of these things are true of our relationship but you didn't establish that relationship. You didn't affect it. You didn't accomplish it. You didn't even desire it. *"I chose you."*

Now then; I want to open this Scripture up just step by step as these truths appear in the text:

First of all: Christ says, *"You didn't choose me!"*

And I want to deal with the question; why do men not choose Christ? If Christ is the water of life why don't men choose Christ? If Christ is the way to God why do men not choose Christ? If Christ is the only foundation that can be laid; why don't men build thereon?

Why do men not choose Christ? Well, I'll give you three reasons:

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First: Men do not choose Christ because they do not feel their need of Christ; that's the first reason.

One day our Lord was eating with Publicans and sinners. You will find this in **Matthew 9:10-13**. And a group of religious Pharisees, men who professed themselves to be moral, righteous, and good, who looked down upon others; they saw Him eating with these Publican sinners and harlots and they said to His disciples off to the side.

They said, "*Why does your master eat with Publicans and sinners?*" And Christ knew their thoughts and He said to them: "*The well do not need a physician but those that are sick. You go learn what that means. Verily I say unto you, I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.*"

And you know; the people who go to the doctor's office who seek the doctor, want the doctor and need the doctor are those people who are sick. And men who choose Christ, who believe on Christ, and who embrace Christ, and who want Christ, the Saviour, the Redeemer and His righteousness, His forgiveness, His pardon, and His cleansing blood are those who need Christ.

They are sinners; they are sinners and they know it. They are helpless sinners and they know it. They are guilty sinners and they know it. They are fallen sinners and they know. They are hell-deserving sinners and they know it.

But the innocent, the innocent doesn't feel any need of mercy. He doesn't seek it. The good do not feel any need of grace so he doesn't seek it. The man who does not feel his sins and does not feel his weakness; he does not seek help, or call for help: "*I will lift up thine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.*"

The man who is strong, moral, and good; he doesn't need any help. That's the reason why men do not choose Christ; they do not feel their need of Christ. "*We be not sinners!*"

Second: The reason men don't choose Christ is they see no wisdom in a crucified Saviour!

Now, they can understand a good prophet who comes and says a lot of moral things and does a moral code or creed by which men will believe. They can understand a man who comes and sets up an earthly kingdom and reigns over a nation.

They can understand a modern healer who will come and relieve men's distress or a humanitarian but they don't understand a crucified Saviour. They do not see any wisdom in that. They do not see any wisdom of God at all in that.

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The Scripture says: *“The preaching of the cross is to them who are perishing foolishness.”* Now, the preaching of good works is not foolishness. The preaching of moral codes is not foolishness. The preaching of philosophy is not foolishness.

The preaching of the cross; what is the cross? The cross is Christ’s death, a substitutionary death. The cross is sin offering and sacrifice and that’s why it’s foolishness, sheer nonsense to this world.

They see that no law can be honored. They see no justice to be satisfied. They see no righteousness to be imputed. They see no requirements to be met. Therefore, the preaching of the crucified Saviour, a substitute, is foolishness, and sheer nonsense.

But now, *“to those who are being saved the cross is the wisdom of God and the power of God.”* It’s the wisdom of God in that the cross reveals how that God can be just and justify me. Christ paid my debt.

He ransomed me and he redeemed me. He was my Substitute. He took my guilt and gave me His grace. He took my death and gave me life. He took my hell and gave me salvation. He’s a substitute.

God poured his wrath on His Son in my place. I see the wisdom of God in the cross. I see the power of God in the cross, how that Christ by His blood, *“cleanseth us from all sin.”* It’s infinite, immutable blood; it’s not how much He shed; it’s who shed it. It’s who died.

Thirdly: Men do not choose Christ because they do not wish to be made holy. It’s like, “We want our way, not God’s way. We want our will, not God’s will.” That was Satan’s sin. That was Adam’s sin. “My will be done, not God’s will; we want to do our own thing.”

Now, if we can get to heaven doing our own thing; that’s fine. If we can get saved and do our own thing, fine. We’ll accept that kind of religion.

But Christ demands to be your Lord, your sovereign, supreme, eternal, Lord. *“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart God hath raised him from the dead; thou shalt be saved.”* Christ is Lord. He’s supreme Lord of all whom He saves.

But we cry: *“We’ll not have this man reign over us.”* When Saul of Tarsus met Christ he said: *“Who are you Lord?”* He said, *“I’m Jesus of Nazareth.”* Do you know the next line? “Well, I’ll tell you this; I’ll be saved but I’m not going to do this or not going to do that.”

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No! He said, “*Lord; what will you have me do? You are my Lord and I am your servant. You speak; your servant hears.*” Men will not lay down their arms of rebellion. They will not surrender their weapons of warfare. They will not stack their arms.

They will not surrender completely and absolutely to those royal claims of King Jesus. They are not going to have it so they don’t choose Christ. They’ll do about anything you tell them to do to get saved. They’ll crawl on their knees so far.

They’ll burn candles and they all say, “Hail Mary” and they’ll get baptized. They will walk down an aisle and shake your hand and raise this hand and raise that hand. They will do about anything you want them to do but they won’t bow to Christ Jesus.

They don’t want a Lord; they want a Saviour, they don’t want a Lord. They want a “doormat named Jesus.” They don’t want a Lord. They want a fire escape; they don’t want a Lord. They want an insurance policy to collect if they need it but they are not going to have this man reign over them.

That was the issue. They crucified Christ. What was the charge? He said he was King. Those soldiers when they took Him in Pilate’s Hall and beat Him and mocked Him; in what office and in what character did they mock Him, as King?

They said, “You are a King? Then we will put a crown on your head. You’re a King? Then we’ll put a robe on your back. You’re a King? Then we will give you a scepter.”

It was as King that Christ was mocked. It was as King that Christ was persecuted. It was as King that Christ was crucified. It was as King that Christ was rejected. They said: “*We have no King but Caesar.*”

Now, they will take a Saviour. They will take a fellow that will feed the multitude and heal the sick, but not a King. I’m telling the truth. That’s the reason men don’t choose Christ. They reject Him as King and Lord. That’s the key to the kingdom of God. “*You didn’t choose me*” Christ said; “*I chose you.*”

All right; let’s see the next thing: “*I chose you.*” Christ looked at these 11 men and he said: “*I chose you.*” That movie “The Ten Commandments” that was on recently, a very, good movie and well made; it had some beautiful things in it as true as Hollywood has ever been to the Bible.

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It left some things to be desired. But there's one illustration in there that I thought was tremendous. Moses was sitting at the foot of that great mountain and his wife was talking to him about God.

And he said: "I don't know your God; I don't know your God." But she said: "Moses; he knows you, he knows you." And my friend; that's true; Christ said, "*I know my sheep. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them I must bring; I know them.*"

He said in **Jeremiah 1:5**: "*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*"

"The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." Yes he does. He foreknew them. He ordained them. He predestinated them. He called them, He justified them, and He glorified them.

Saul of Tarsus holding the coats of those mad men stoning Stephen, Saul of Tarsus going to the high priest with questioning letters to persecute believers, Saul of Tarsus riding his horse and leading an army of men to cast believers into prison. Saul of Tarsus did not know Jesus Christ but He knew him. He knows you. And he'll have you; He'll bring you; "*All that my Father giveth me shall come to me.*"

Old Peter sat by the fire warming his hands and that little girl came up and said: "*Why you are one of the disciples.*" He said, "*I know not the man.*" No, but He knows you Peter; He knows you. He said: "*I chose you.*"

When did he choose us? That's a good question isn't it? Isn't that a natural question, when did He choose us? Well, the Scripture says: "*According as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world,*" **Ephesians 1:4**.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 says: "*Beloved; I give thanks to God for you brethren, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.*"

Before I was born, before I believed, before Adam fell, before God created the world, before Satan rebelled, before the morning star sang together, God had a people in His wisdom and righteousness chosen and given to Christ for whom Christ suffered and died and for whom He now intercedes.

When, from the beginning? Why did He choose you? Why did He choose me? Now that's a good question; why did he choose us? And the only answer; you can study until you die and the only answer you can come up with; you can't find anything in yourself to recommend you to

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God. You can't find any reason in any creature that would merit the righteousness and love and mercy of God.

You know what? Our Lord gave the answer. One day He rejoiced in spirit and lifted His eyes to heaven in **Matthew 11:25-26** and He said: *"Father; I thank you Lord of heaven and earth. You've hid these things from the wise and prudent but you revealed them to babes; even so Father it seemed good in thy sight."*

In **Mark 3:13** the Scripture says, *"He went up to a mountain and he called to him whom he would."* **Romans 9:15 and 16** says, *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious."*

So, if you want to answer these questions, Christ said: *"You didn't choose me."* Left to yourself you would still be out there in the dark. Left to yourself you would still be out there in rebellion. Left to yourself you would still be walking the ways of evil.

"I chose you." When did He choose you, *"before the world began?"* Why did I choose you, *"because it seemed good in my sight?"* And Paul wrote: *"According to the good pleasure of his own will."*

There were two apostasies, one in heaven and one on earth. Satan led one in heaven and the angels followed him and Adam led the one on earth and we followed him. And God chose to show mercy, not to the angels who fell but to men.

"He took not on himself the nature of angels but he took on himself the seed of Abraham." He died for men. Do you see that? *"I ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit (for my glory) and that your fruit should remain."*