
GETTING MY ATTENTION

The Process:

- names are gathered,
- a list of candidates for the position is drawn up,
- qualifications of the candidates are evaluated,
- interviews with each of candidates are conducted,
- a choice is made,
- the position is offered,
- the announcement is made to the public!

Since November 8th, when the 45th president of the United States was elected, this process has been going on over and over and over again to fill the high level positions in the next administration.

For those chosen, it is an honor to serve the president and the country!

FOCUSING MY THOUGHTS

Would you be surprised if I told you God has a “selection process” for ALL those who serve in His Kingdom?

Well, God does!

But, I will tell you right now, up front,

God’s “selection process” is vastly different from the process listed above!

God does things quite differently than we humans do!

All three of today’s Scripture Readings are about the “Chosen” and the Announcement of the “Chosen”.

“MY CHOSEN” – MY SON

First and foremost, God is the One Who makes the “Choice”, the “one” selected is “His Chosen”!

What is most interesting about the world, about the creation, is that God made His “Choice”, made His “Choices” before creation!

The apostle Peter writes this about the Savior, Jesus, in his First letter:

²⁰He [Christ Jesus] was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you... – 1 Peter 1:20

Before God created the world, God already foreknew He would have to recreate it!

Yes, whatever God created, God would have to create anew!

God foreknew that all mankind would be corrupted, unfit for service, – indeed, rejecting service to God, rejecting God Himself.

Out of the corrupted, out of those lost and rejecting Him,

God would have to create anew

a people who loved Him and who were fit for service in His Kingdom.

So, before creation, God “Chose” to send His Son, to become flesh and blood, to live the righteous life every person should live, and to receive the punishment for the sin of all people.

Through the prophet Isaiah,

God revealed how He would make the Announcement of His “Chosen” One!

¹Behold My Servant, Whom I uphold, My Chosen, in Whom My soul delights; I have put My Spirit upon Him; – Isaiah 42:1

When Jesus came to John the Baptist at the Jordan River, the time for the “Announcement” had come!

¹⁶And when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him;

¹⁷and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased.” – Matthew 3:16-17

In the Law (Deuteronomy 19:15), God established that to be legally valid, a charge must be established by “two” or “three” witnesses.

¹⁵Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.”

So we see, that when God Announced His “Chosen” One,

the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in visible form, as a dove, and the Father Himself spoke from heaven, making the announcement!

God also provided a “third” witness. John the Baptist tells us in his own words:

³¹I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that He might be revealed to Israel.”

³²And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on Him.

³³I myself did not know Him, but He Who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on Whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is He Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

³⁴And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.” – John 1:31-34

All four Gospels record a testimony to the Baptism of Jesus!

God has spoken clearly,

and the witness of the Father, the Holy Spirit and John the Baptist are a valid testimony to the Announcement of God’s Chosen One, sent as the Savior of the world!

“MY CHOSEN” – MY PEOPLE

God “Announced” His Choice of His Son as the Savior,

when Jesus was Baptized and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him!

So God also “Announces” His Choice of those He creates anew when He pours out the Holy Spirit upon each of them!

On the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples (as Jesus had promised before He ascended into heaven),

the apostle Peter proclaimed Jesus as God’s Chosen One, the Savior, Who was crucified and bore the punishment for mankind’s sin, and Whom God raised from the dead in victory over death,

to reign over forever over His Kingdom of the redeemed!

When the people who heard Peter's message asked the apostles,

²⁷Brothers, what shall we do?" ²⁸Peter said to them:
"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ
for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
²⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off,
everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself." – Acts 2:37-39

**In Baptism, God is making known His "Choice", His "Chosen" before Creation
to be a "son", an "heir" of His Kingdom.**

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,
⁴even as He chose us in [Christ] before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy and blameless before Him. – Ephesians 1:3-4

Scripture teaches us so much in that one sentence!

★ The word "Bless" literally means, 'to give a gift of great value'.
"Blessed be the God and Father" calls upon you and me to give to God
'a gift of great value'!

What do you have of 'great value' that you can give to God?

I will give you a hint: What can God not "take" from you,
but must be "given" to Him by you?

ANSWER: Your thanks, your praise, your love, your devotion!

What could possibly motivate you, move you, to do this?

★ God has 'given you a gift of great value'!

"Who has blessed us in Christ"

What "gifts of great value" are yours in Christ?

"Even as He [God] chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world!"

God knew you before you, your parents or anyone else ever knew you!

God first knew you as a corrupted and lost descendant of Adam.

Even so, He "Chose" you to be His!

And, in Christ, He **Claimed** you, **Cleansed** you and **Commissioned** you
as His son, fit to serve Him as your King and to serve His Kingdom!

"... that we should be holy and blameless before Him!"

You see, by virtue of Creation, as a descendant of Adam,
you are unfit for service to God or His Kingdom!

As part of this Creation, you have no hope! Only corruption and condemnation!

God, in His foreknowledge, and out of His grace and His love,

"Chose" you to be created anew, to be "born again" by the power of His Spirit!

To be reborn into God's family, to be His child,

you had to be cut off, severed from your old family, from Adam.

In effect, God said, **"You have to die to the life you received from Adam!"**

In Baptism, you will die as a son of Adam!

Then, I'm going to raise you to life from the dead!

I'm going to give you a new life in Christ!"

God did this in Baptism!

★ ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus
were baptized into His death?

⁴We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death,...

In Baptism, God **"buried"** you! Did you know that?

Yes, in Baptism, you, descended from Adam, died; and God **"buried"** you!

Whatever you received from Adam, corruption, sin, condemnation,

has been **"put to death, crucified"** and **"buried"**!

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT? Faith believes you have "died" and been "raised"!



★ Now, here's the really Good News!

*"...in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father,
we too might walk in newness of life!"*

In Baptism, after you were **"put to death"**, God **"raised"** you!

God **"raised"** you free from sin and condemnation!

God **"raised"** you holy and blameless in Christ!

God **"raised"** you a "son", an heir of eternal life!

God **"raised"** you as His servant, and a servant of His Kingdom!

If that is too much for you to say, then use the testimony of the apostle Paul:

²⁰**I have been crucified with Christ.**

It is no longer I who live, but Christ Who lives in me.

And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God,

Who loved me and gave Himself for me." – Galatians 2:20

In Scripture, that is the BAPTISMAL CREED!

Those words are The Creed of everyone Baptized into Christ!

MEMORIZE THOSE WORDS! LIVE THOSE WORDS!

Notice what the apostle Paul wrote in verse 11 of Romans chapter 6:

¹¹*So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

APPLICATION FOR MY LIFE

**You see, in eternity, before He created one person, God foreknew everything!
So, God made "The Plan" to create anew a people for Himself
out of all the corrupt and lost descendants of Adam!
It was the only way for God to have what He desired, a family to love!
God has always known His "Plan"!**

Once Adam and Eve were lost in sin, God began revealing, making known, His "Plan".

In revealing some of the details of His **"Plan"** to mankind

over the centuries through the prophets,

God gave "Hope" to everyone living in suffering and death in the world.

When the right time came, God made it known to John the Baptist

and those with him at the Jordan River the day Jesus came to be Baptized.

"Here's My Son! My Chosen One!"

God had this recorded in Scripture so that people everywhere

and in every generation can read the testimony of the **THREE WITNESSES!**

God has also made known His "Plan" for you when you were Baptized!

God said, I have Chosen you! You are Mine!

You have "died" to Adam! I have raised you in Christ!

God has so richly **"Blessed"** you! What a *"gift of great value"* He has bestowed on you!

You have something God desires, but that God cannot "take" from you!

You must freely, willingly, offer this "gift of great value" to Him!

The "gift of great value" that God has given to you, Christ, new life in Christ,

God gave freely, willingly, out of His love for you, and out of His grace toward you!

The Blessing is yours!

God has made His "Choice"! You know "Whom" He has "Chosen"!

May you live the "Blessing" today, and every day! AMEN