

17 May 2009
6th Sunday of Easter
(outline version)

BEING CHOSEN:

“It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain...”

Do you remember how important it was to be “chosen?”

Picking teams at recess in grade school & in high school gym class
(kickball / dodge ball)

Contest between Martin Fitchner and myself – to be chosen LAST
Team captains were ALWAYS Greg Herb & Butch Wilson
But no matter what, always chosen LAST
Until one day...for some reason, I was chosen first!
How awesome I felt – they had chosen ME!
They weren't FORCED to pick me (because I was last)
but actually CHOSE me!

LOVE our MOTIVATION

It was God who has chosen us – EACH of us – to be object of His love.

He shows the depth of this love in His Sacrifice on the cross.

Think about our lives:

- do you give gifts out of love – a sacrifice out of love for another
- OR are you FORCED to give a gift – to keep them happy.
- Think about when you first had a girl/boy friend or your spouse...
- Why did you buy flowers? Why did you buy jewelry? Why did you make sacrifices to buy her that engagement ring?
- Because you LOVED her or him...

Love must be our motivation in everything we do in life.

Love must be the motivations for why we keep the commandments of God...

“Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in His love.”

The commandments not just “rules” to be followed, but sacrifices of love

Act of contrition: “I am sorry for my sins...most of all, because they have offended you, my God, who are so deserving of all my love.”

Sin = failure to love = failure to sacrifice for God.

HIGHEST PROOF OF LOVE:

How do we know we truly love God? If we keep His commandments.

What is the highest proof of love – which Jesus shows us on the cross?

- to love someone who is against us – to love our enemies.
- Isn't this what Jesus did on the cross – loved even those who were killing him – loved those who had failed to love him – not only then, but now – choosing to love US – despite our sinfulness and failures and lack of love.

Even when we are hurt or put down or despised or rejected, the greatest proof of our love of God is that we love those who hurt us

- not by force, but by choice
- just as Christ loves us who have hurt Him by our sins
- just as Christ has chosen us to be objects of His love, despite our unworthiness

“It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain...”

What fruit remains?

- fruit that is rotten and vicious and full of poison?
- Or fruit that is fresh and wholesome and life giving?

Do you want to bear fruit for God's harvest? Then we must:

- love, even our enemies, as Christ loves us
- we must choose to love even those who hate us
- THERE is the proof that we are disciples, that we choose to love others (even if they have not chosen to love us)

“This I command you: love one another.”

- Sacrifices freely embraced,
- Loving those who fail to love us

THESE are the fruits that will remain.