

foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you” cf. Revel.13:8; Matt.20:28

3. Generally Applied

- a. Matt.6:33 *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*
- b. Counsel is to be sought from God, your church elders, your parents, your church family. and other godly people outside of your church family – Prov. 11:14; 15:22

4. Particularly Considered:

- a. **The Timing** of (the) this Commitment – “*before the foundation of the world*”; the exact same time that the choice was made – references > for **God’s choice**, Eph.1:4 “*just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,*” and for **Christ’s commitment**, Revel.13:8b “*...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” CF. I Pet.1:18-20
- b. **The Extent** of (the) this Commitment – to the giving of Himself (the Lord Jesus)
- c. **The Application** to unmarried believers seeking a spouse:
 - o **First and foremost**, the giving of yourself to God -- in general: (for and) because of His salvation given to you (Eph.5:1, 2), and in particular: to God’s leading and guidance in finding His choice to be your spouse (Prov.3:5, 6; Mk.12:30; Ps.84:11 > Pr.18:22)
 - o **Second**, the giving of yourself to conduct yourself, control your behavior, toward a prospective spouse in a God-honoring manner.
 - o Young people, you need to have A PLAN of choosing a spouse. That plan needs to be BASED upon the counsel of God. That plan needs to have GOALS in it that God has set forth for His redeemed people in His written word. That plan needs to have strategies for OVERCOMING the OBSTACLE of SIN that stands in the way of your choosing your spouse God’s way. That plan needs to include COMMITMENT to God’s plan for choosing a spouse His way, working that plan day by day.

III. Conclusion: Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Then it should be manifested in the way you conduct yourself!

- o Know that we (your church family) are here to help you in this important matter in every way we can!

Biblical Love

Imitating God’s Commitment in Choosing a Spouse

PBC Sunday PM 2/28/2021

- I. Our Main Scripture Texts: Eph.1:3-14; 5:1, 2
- II. God’s Choice and Commitment Applied to Believers who are single (or Biblically unmarried) and desiring a spouse
 - A. God’s Choice Biblically Substantiated
 1. From our main text: Eph.1:4, *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,*
 - o The point is that God actively chose His elect people. He was actively involved in choosing who would be His bride.
 2. Application: Generally speaking, when it comes to being married, you will be actively involved in choosing who your spouse will be. (Applied to the USA culture)
 - B. The Basis of God’s Choice: “Pure and Free Grace”
 1. From our main text, notice HOW God made His choice:
 - a. Note the 5 “according to...” phrases in Eph.1:5-11
 - b. Notice WHAT (or WHO) was the determining factor of all that was done for His chosen people, including their being chosen. It was God! Eph.1:5-14.
 2. Application: HOW are believers, who are single and desiring to be married, to make their choice of a spouse? How are they to do so by imitating God?
 - a. By doing so according to God’s revealed will that is recorded in the Bible. Which is:
 - “*Do not be unequally yoked together with the unbelievers...*” 2 Cor. 6:14
 - To marry “*...only in the Lord...*” I Cor.7:39b (8)
 - Negatively, to “*Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.*” I Cor.6:18
 - b. WHY should a single or unmarried believer use such a Biblical Basis for making their choice of a spouse? I Cor.6:19, 20
 - C. The Goal of God’s Choice:
 1. Summarized in a few words: it is for God’s glory and the eternal and spiritual good of His elect people. Eph.1:4-14a

2. Application: WHAT is to be the believer's goal in selecting a marriage partner? How is this goal to be shaped by imitating God?

- a. 1st and foremost, by pleasing God. This is what Jesus did all the days of His earthly life! Jn.8:28, 29
- b. By seeking the eternal and spiritual good of the one you are desiring to marry. This is also what Jesus did! Eph.5:26-29

D. The Obstacle standing in the way of God's choice being made a reality and the goal of that choice being achieved: our SIN. Sin IS any lack of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God. Rom.3:23; I Jn.3:4 (cf. Rom.3:10-12; 8:7, 8)

1. This is what the Lord Jesus battled successfully against. Knowing God's will for His life, the Lord Jesus did not succumb to Satan's temptations, not even an offered short-cut to Jesus' "supposed goal" of self-glory - Matt.4:1-11
2. Application: Here is a spiritual enemy that you, as believer, are facing: the world. I Jn.2:15-17.

- a. Outward appearances (outward good looks or beauty) are often too important, too high on the priority list of things needed in a prospective spouse!
- b. Satan's attack is 2-fold:
 - 1) The OUTSIDE **conforming pressures of the world**,
 - 2) The INSIDE **desires of your remaining, old sinful nature**,
- c. HOW THEN IS the believer to spiritually fight against this powerful and persuasive temptation of Satan?! The spiritual weapon to be employed: the word of God, Eph.6:17b, Ps.119:105; Jas.4:7, 8a; the motivating force for this battle: the Love of God, the Love for God, that has been poured into your (into each believer's) heart! – Titus 3:4-6 > Rom.5:5

E. The Commitment that God made to righteously overcome that obstacle of sin standing in the way of Him attaining His desired goal for His elect people.

1. This Commitment Simply Stated: God, the Father, gave His Son – Jn.3:16; I Jn.4:10. God, the Son, gave Himself – Eph.5:2. God, the Holy Spirit, gives Himself by indwelling each of God's elect – Rom.8:9-11
- I want to show and establish from Scriptures that God has had A PLAN for everything that will ever take place throughout all time and eternity. That eternal plan is God's Eternal Purpose or Decree. **The Decrees** of God ARE, His

eternal **purpose**, according to **the counsel of His will**, whereby for His own glory, He has **foreordained** whatever comes to pass.

- Def.: God's works of **providence** ARE His most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions
- **Consider the words and phrases in Eph.1:3-14** (our text) indicating the existence of God's eternal plan, and that plan being followed and fulfilled by God.
 - 1:4 *just as He **chose us** (believers, 1:1) in Him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should **be holy and without blame** before Him in love, cf. 1:5, 9, 11*
- **Consider Other Scriptures** indicating the existence, the following of and the fulfillment of God's eternal plan
 - 2 Tim.1:9 *who **has saved us** and **called us** with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to **His own purpose and grace** which was **given to us in Christ Jesus** before time began, cf. Matt.25:34*
 - Acts 2:23 *Him, **being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God**, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;*
 - Acts 17: 26 *And **He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings**, cf. Isa.46:9-11*
- **Indications that the Lord Jesus was aware of and followed this eternal plan.**
 - Matt.13:34,35 > Ps.78:2
 - Matt.26:54-56, spoke to Peter, "*Put your sword in its place...How then could **the Scriptures be fulfilled**, that it must happen thus?*"
 - Jn.19:28 > Ps.69:21 – *After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, **that the Scriptures might be fulfilled**, said, "I thirst!"*
- 2. This Commitment Biblically Substantiated
 - I Pet.1:18-20 *knowing that you were **not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 1:19 but **with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 1:20 **He indeed was foreordained before the*****