

Biblical Love

Imitating God in Overcoming the Obstacle of Sin in the Matter of Choosing a Spouse

PBC Sunday PM 2/14/2021

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.15-17 *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 2:16 For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. 5:17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*
 - a. Outward appearances (outward good looks or beauty) are too important, too high on our priority list of things needed in prospective spouse! An Example: Lot's choice was made (based) upon what he saw and how he evaluated what he saw – what he considered to be most valuable. It was made (based) upon "outward appearances" Read Gen.13:10-12. Consider the resulting sad end, Gen.19:1-38; I Pet.2:7
 - o Consider now the contrast to what the LORD God told Samuel in I Sam.16:7 *But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*
 - o This is the "heart" of the issue: submitting yourself to choose as God would have you to choose!
1. The enemy's tactics and attacks
 - a. Satan uses the technology of today to entice and allure his victims into his most potent and successful temptation

- This attack which was once afar and took some concentrated effort to get to, NOW is only 1 click away
- This allurements (moral impurity) has always been and still is extremely powerful and persuasive temptation! Consider some of its victims that are recorded in the Bible - Adam – I Tim.2:14; Abraham – gave-in to the world’s way of getting a son (Gen.16); David – besides the wives he had, desired and took Bathsheba (2 Sam.11); Solomon – I Ki.11:4; Samson – who thought that he could play with this temptation and not get burnt (got hurt, trampled, and ensnared) - Judg.13-16
- Of the early O.T. patriarchs, only Isaac and Joseph escaped un-scathed by this Spiritual Giant of Moral Impurity

b. **HOW Satan tempts** (Satan’s attack is 2-fold)

- Satan CANNOT make you sin! You sin because that is what you want to do at that moment.
 - Your Passions may OVERRUN your spiritual thinking – Rom.7:13-25. The ex. of Adam – Eve OR loneliness
 - Your Passions may CLOUD, LIMIT your spiritual thinking process. The ex. of Adam – Eve OR nothing versus Eve OR God -everything
 - Eve OR nothing – no other woman on earth; she was created specifically for Adam; she was Adam’s suitable companion, “*the helper comparable to him*” (Gen.2:18, 20). There was no other visible alternative.
 - Eve OR God (everything) – this is the real issue
 - ✓ The Creator of Eve; the One who saw, knew and responded to the need of Adam (before Adam even knew his need or verbalized his need) – “*...It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.*” (Gen.2:18)
 - ✓ Yield to Eve and the temptation OR remain faithful to God, continue obeying God and trusting in God?
 - ✓ Who do you love supremely? Who should you love supremely?
 - You cannot see and evaluate this choice correctly with the eyes of flesh!
 - You can only see and evaluate this choice correctly with the eyes of faith (in God)! Heb.11:1
- James 1:12-15 *Blessed is the man who endures temptation (does not give into temptation); for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has*

promised to those who love Him. 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 1:15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, bring forth death.

○ **Satan’s attack is 2-fold:**

- 1) The OUTSIDE conforming pressures of the world, Rom.12:2 “*And do not be conformed to this world,...*”; the pressure of wanting to be like everyone else, to be accepted and liked – “Everybody else is behaving this way.” Yes, that may be true. Generally speaking, Everybody in this evil, sinful world may be behaving that way. But you, as a believer, are not of this world! You have been called by God to be different - to be the light to this dark world!
 - 2) The INSIDE desires of your remaining, old sinful nature, that needs to be mortified – Rom.8:13; Col.3:5-10 Rom.8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; BUT IF by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.* Col.3:5-10 *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 3:6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 3:7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. 3:8 BUT NOW you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 3:10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him*
 - Here is where the main and the fiercest part of the spiritual war is fought: in your heart and in your mind.
 - You lose the battle here, and your sin will manifest itself in your words and/or in your actions.
2. **HOW THEN IS** the believer to spiritually fight against this powerful and persuasive temptation of Satan?! Let me teach you how fight spiritually! (the spiritual weapon to be employed: the word of God; the motivating force for this battle: the Love of God, the Love for God, that has been poured into our hearts! – Titus 3:4-6 > Rom.5:5 v

- a. Consider the powerful, spiritual weapons that God has given to every believer – 2 Cor.10:3-5 *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 10:5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, That is power!!*
- The listing of the believer’s spiritual armor in Eph.6:14-18
 - Follow the example of the Lord Jesus in Matt:4:1-11 > Ja.4:7 Use the word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit - Eph.6:17b “...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
 - Ps.119:11 *Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.*
 - Ps.119:105 *Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*
 - The commands and the encouraging promises - Jas.4:7, 8a *‘Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...’*
 - Young people need to keep in mind that they are physically changing, when they go from childhood to adulthood. Understand what is happening to you! You are growing toward independence. Do not be in a hurry! Do not cast aside Godly counsel or rebel against Godly counsel! Seek Biblical wisdom!
- b. The motivating force and determination behind the diligent pursuit of becoming a spiritually skilled swordsman or swordswoman, IS “the Love of God”, your personal Love for God
- Rom.5:5 *Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*
 - Titus 3:4-6 *But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit 3:6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior*
 - Rom.13:14 *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*
 - Rom.8:9-11 *But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells IN you. Now if anyone does*

not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 8:10 And if Christ is IN you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells IN you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells IN you.

- Rom.8:31b “...if God is for us, who can be against?”
- Joseph’s example: Joseph’s age approximation: 30 years old Gen.39:7-9 *And it came to pass after these things that his master’s wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, “Lie with me.” 39:8 But he refused and said to his master’s wife, “Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 39:9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”* It was Joseph’s personal love for God!, that was the motivating force and determination behind his diligent pursuit to keep himself holy and pure for God. It was “the Love of God” that the Holy Spirit had poured out into Joseph’s heart and mind!
- Application: Has the Holy Spirit poured out into your heart this “Love of God”? (You will not make it without it!) You need this “Love of God” poured out into your heart in order overcome and defeat Satan’s temptations to depart from God’s revealed will in choosing a spouse!! Do you love God more than yourself ?!