



A PUBLICATION FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN MISSIONS, UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH INTERNATIONAL

ARE YOU CALLED, CHOSEN, FAITHFUL?

In this lesson there are two particular Scriptures that have arrested my attention. They refer to being called and chosen. One verse takes it the extra step and includes being faithful.

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful” (Revelation 17:14).

“For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14).

Those that are with Jesus Christ, in the Book of Revelation, are identified as called, chosen, and faithful. This is the first—and only—time that these three words appear together. In a nutshell, these three simple words highlight the three phases of our spiritual journey. They are three stages of Christian maturity.

CALLED...

In general, the entire world is called. It is the call, extended to all of us, to leave the kingdom of darkness and turn to the kingdom of light; to be born again; to initiate a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the call to obey the plan of salvation (Acts 2:38). See also 1 Peter 2:9.

When we obey the plan of salvation we become part of the body of Christ. The church is the *ekklesia*; the called-out ones.

When Christ walked on the earth, He personally called His disciples (Mark 1:17, 20). Today, He calls lost souls through preaching: “Whereunto he called you by our gospel” (2 Thessalonians 2:14). See also Romans 10:14.

Jesus used the expression, “Many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14). These words are used in the context of a wedding banquet. The story explains the process by which the called are actually chosen. Everyone was invited to the wedding. The invitation went out two times to two separate types of people. Although those in the original group refused to come and made worthless excuses, many in the second group did come. One that came did not have on the customary wedding garment. He was thrown out. Those called are expected to be clothed in righteous acts; possessing a changed way of thinking that led them to a changed way of living.

Some refuse the invitation and, as a consequence, are not chosen. They are too busy pursuing the pleasures of this world. They are choked by the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches (Matthew 13:22). Others outright reject Christianity. God provides a royal feast for the perishing, hungry souls. He issues the

invitation. He calls all to be saved: See 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; Acts 2:40; Philippians 2:13; and John 3:17, 6:44.

CHOSEN...

Those that respond to God's call are chosen by God to be His disciples and to work with Him in the Church. They are steadfast and unmovable. They adhere to—and keep—the truth. The chosen are “in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1) and have “put on the Lord Jesus” (Romans 13:14). Such a person puts God first in his life. He puts God's Word into daily practice. He abides in Jesus and Jesus abides in him (John 15:4-6). He does not become entangled in the affairs of this life. See 2 Timothy 2:3-4.

“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning *chosen you to salvation* through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he *called you by our gospel*, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” (2 Thessalonians 2:13-15, Emphasis mine).

...FAITHFUL

The called and chosen in Revelation stood faithfully in the Lord despite trials, tribulations, sufferings, adversities, afflictions, persecutions, and conflicts. They continued in the faith. They were grounded and settled. They refused to move away from the hope of the gospel (Colossians 1:23). They would not give a foothold to the devil (Ephesians 4:27). They must resist the danger of being swept back into the clutches of the devil. They were over-comers (Revelation

12:11), more than conquerors (Romans 8:37), and triumphant. They proved they were faithful (trustworthy) to Him (1 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 2:2). They could be relied upon. They were fit for spiritual battle. They are the doers of God's Word (James 1:22). They made their calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). Today, we carry on their example and follow in their footsteps. It is only those that endure until the end that will be saved (Matthew 24:13). The choice is ours. It is a decision made day after day. We commit to the choice and persevere to the end. As we remain loyal to God we become the true “called, chosen, and faithful.”

Clarence Jordan earned two doctorate degrees but felt called to poor people. His farm was burned down and many of his friends and followers ran away. The next day, a reporter came to report on the closing of the farm. He asked, “After fourteen years of hard work, all is now gone. How successful have you been?”

Clarence replied “I think you misunderstand, sir. We are not about success. We are about faithfulness.” Clarence understood something that hopefully all of us comprehend. It isn't enough to be called and chosen, we must be faithful.

David Fraser said, “To rule with Christ in his kingdom, we must *hear* God's calling, *respond* to the calling with a changed life and be *faithful* to that calling until the end of life.”

It is only then that we will hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:23).

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