

Biblical Love

With Choice Comes Commitment Application to Unmarried Believers, Part 2

Imitating God's Goal in Choosing a Spouse

PBC Sunday PM 1/10/2021

- I. Our Main Scripture Text: Eph.1:3-14; 5:1, 2, 25-32
- 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,*
 - a. It is not something that has been done "for" God, or done "to" God, but something that God "has actively done". See further Eph.1:5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.
 - b. The point is that God actively chose His elect people. He was actively involved in choosing who would be His bride.
- 2. Application: Allowing for "cultural differences" and making particular application to "the current culture of the USA", it can be said: When it comes to being married, you will be actively involved in choosing who your spouse will be. As God chose the elect to be His spiritual bride (the church); so are individual believers to choose who will be their spouse.

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 "*according to...*" phrases in Eph.1:5-11
 - b. Notice IN WHOM and BY WHOM God made His choice of His elect people. It was "*in*" and "*by*" and "*through*" our Lord Jesus Christ! Look at Eph.1:4-13.
 - c. Furthermore, notice WHAT (or WHO) was the determining factor of all that was done for His chosen people, including their being chosen. It was God!
- 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. First and Foremost, by seeking (desiring) God's counsel!! See Eph.1:11 When it comes to seeking counsel in this important matter of choosing a spouse, the counsel that you should seek above all others is God's Counsel!

- b. By doing so According to God's revealed will that is recorded in the Bible. (> 1:5 "...*according to the good pleasure of His will,*"") Ps.119:105

✳ **WHAT is God's revealed will for His redeemed people in this serious and important matter?**

- ✳ "*Do not be unequally yoked together with the unbelievers...*" 2 Cor. 6:14 > worshipping the SAME God, living by the SAME rules of faith & practice
- ✳ To marry "...*only in the Lord...*" I Cor.7:39b (8)
- ✳ Negatively, to "*Flee sexual immorality...*" I Cor. 6:18 (considered more fully under II. D.)

- c. **WHY** should a single or unmarried believer use such a Biblical Basis for making their choice of a spouse?

- 1) Because God's Counsel is THE BEST BASIS for making every choice and decision in your earthly life, especially this important choice of a spouse!
- 2) Because that is what God has worked into you to do! Phil.1:13; Titus 3:5-7; Rom.5:5. Lordship Salvation: I Cor. 6:19, 20
- 3) Because you have been "redeemed" – bought out of the slave market of sin; no longer a slave of sin, living by sinful principles and practices, I Pet.1:18-21
- 4) Because you love God supremely, with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. (Matt.22:37) And Because you love God because He first loved you. (I Jn.4:19)
- 5) Because you earnestly desire to manifest your love for God by keeping His commandments Jn.14:15, 21, by obeying His word, Jn.14:23
- 6) Because your chief end (your God-given purpose for living) is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. I Cor.10:31

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.
 - a. From our main text: what is found in Eph. 1:4-14
 - 1:4 "...*that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,*"
 - 1:5 "...*having predestined us to the adoption as sons...*"
 - 1:6 "...*He made us accepted in the Beloved.*"
 - 1:10 "...*that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things..."*
 - 1:11 "...*In Him also we have obtained an inheritance..."*

- 1:13 "...you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,"
 - 1:14 "who is the guarantee of our inheritance..."
 - b. In terms of the bride of Christ being made acceptable and ready for her wedding day – Eph.5:25-32 *Husbands love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 5:27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.* 5:28 So Husband ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but *nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does* the church. 5:30 for we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 5:31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become *one flesh*." 5:32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
 - c. WHY would God do this for these chosen sinners?
 - "...to the praise of the glory of His grace," 1:6
 - "...to the praise of His glory." 1:12, 14
2. Application: WHAT is to be the (single) 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 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself, but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."
 - To glorify God, I Cor.10:31
 - To manifest your love to God, Jn.14:15, 21
 - To enjoy God and what God has given to us to lead us into His full joy, I Jn.1:4
 - b. By seeking the eternal and spiritual good of the one you are desiring to marry. *This is also what Jesus did.* Note the following phrase from Eph.5:26-29
 - 5:26 *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*
 - 5:27 *that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*
 - 5:29 "...but *nourishes and cherishes* it (a man's own physical body), *just as the Lord does* the church."
- c. **Particularly Applied** to the "courting culture" that is currently in the USA. **HOW is this to effect and influence what you do on a courtship outing with that prospective spouse?** Consider the following Courtship Worksheet:
- The Goal of your courtship should be:
- To get to know one another **spiritually**
 - Know where each is in their walk with the Lord (It is assumed that both are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. > 2 Cor.6:14; I Cor.7:39b)
 - Know what is believed about God, about salvation, about the written word of God being "the" rule of faith and practice in a person's life. What evidences are apparent NOW, that such beliefs are being diligently embraced and being obviously manifested in each person's life? ("Therefore by their fruits you will know them." Matt.7:20 Jesus was speaking about false prophets, but a more general application is also true.) If there are differences, know what those differences are and whether those differences can be or need to be resolved, and to what extent.
 - Know what is believed about the husband – wife relationship in the Bible – what the individual (standard) role of each should be; the individual degree of commitment to attaining and manifesting that standard or role for God's glory
 - Know what is believed about the parent - child relationship in the Bible – this will affect the relationship you have with your in-laws as well as with any future children

- To get to know one another **generally**
 - Likes & dislikes, goals, desires, people admired or not admired and why
 - Personal weaknesses and strengths – spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, physically
 - Personal evaluation systems followed (methods employed, used) to evaluate people, things and circumstances
 - The decision-making criteria followed (used)
 - Get to know the parents of the prospective spouse – are they Christians? Do they practice what they believe? Note that your prospective spouse will have a tendency to be like their parent of the same gender.
 - To enjoy the person's company
 - What you do, needs to be planned – a beginning time, a schedule (general) of what will happen during the courtship outing and a return time
 - Where to go: to Biblically wholesome places
 - Go to church
 - Go to a church activity
 - Go to a group function that is Biblically wholesome
 - Go to a family outing that is Biblically wholesome – your family or the prospective spouse's family
 - Go to a Biblically wholesome secular activity – such as participating in or observing sports events; attending concerts, a community event; going shopping, going to an amusement park, a museum, an art gallery; going on sightseeing day-trips
 - Go out to dinner with another like-minded couple or family
 - Go help out a family member, a church member, a neighbor, a friend or a new acquaintance
 - Work on a project together in the presence of others, work on a group project
 - What to do on a courtship outing: Talk, Share, Edify, Encourage
 - Share what you are learning in your daily Bible reading; Edify one another in the things of God
 - Talk about the conflicts and trials you are personally experiencing and seek Biblical counsel on how best to handle those conflicts and trials – from God's word, from your parents (especially if they are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ), from your church leaders, from other mature Christians in your church or with whom you are acquainted and trust
 - Talk about current events in your community, what is happening in the world, and how those things should be viewed Biblically
 - Encourage one another in Memorizing Scripture
 - Encourage one another to be strong in the faith, not growing weary in doing good and not losing heart in endeavoring to glorify God in every aspect of your lives
 - Talk about little things and big things, important matters and seemingly unimportant matters
 - Who goes with you on a courtship outing:
 - Christian friends sharing the same desire to imitate God's Goal in choosing a spouse
 - Always Beware of the Very Strong Temptations that come from being alone together!
 - d. Furthermore, if the qualified (single) person you are courting turns out to be a person you do not marry, you can walk away from that relationship knowing that you have done them spiritual good, having no vain regrets.
 - 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.
 - E. The Commitment the Son of God made to righteously overcome that obstacle standing in the way of Him attaining His desired goal for His elect people.
- Conclusion:** Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Show me by your works. (Jas.2:14-18) Know that we (your church family) are here to help you in this important matter in every way we can!