

ICE BREAKER

What is an area of your life where you have a hard time believing God loves you?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What part of the message was most encouraging to you? What part do you find challenging?
2. What did You notice about God in the passage? What did you notice about yourself and other people in it?

GOSPEL EXCHANGE (REDEMPTIVE WORK)

Jesus asks us to give Him our burdens (Matthew 11:28-29), whatever they may be (a lie we have believed about God or ourselves, our hurt or negative emotions, or even our concerns for loved ones), so He can carry them for us and give us His peace (wholeness and completeness) in exchange.

What do you want to exchange with Jesus today?

What is the burden? “Lord Jesus, I give you my...”

What’s His gift? “Lord Jesus, I receive your...”

ACTION QUESTIONS

1. What is one step of obedience you can take this week, based on what you’ve learned today? *(NOTE – You might consider stopping and prayerfully asking God to answer this question for you, taking 30-45 seconds to listen in silence for an answer, then write it down.)*
2. During the coming week, who is someone with whom you can share what you learned today? *(NOTE – Consider repeating the same step with this question as the previous question.)*



Sermon Study - Conversation Guide

September 17, 2023

“God is Never Tired of Choosing You”

Ephesians 1:11-17

This guide is a discipleship tool for personal reflection, family conversations, for home groups, and for Table Talk on Sundays @10:40 am and 12:15 pm on the Lowell Patio

Coastal Community Church
mycoastal.org

NOTES: God is Never Tired of Choosing You (Eph. 1:11-17)
Pastor Andy Rock

God is never uncertain about choosing you. Ever. That's the heart of today's message. I know that seems like a simple enough truth, one that isn't easily forgotten. But the resistance we have to this deep truth is profound in all human beings. So, Paul continues hammering home this truth into our hearts which we struggle to believe.

1:11 *In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,*

Again, Paul pulls out the phrase 'predestined'. What's he saying? Look at the last phrase, 'the purpose of his will.' Jesus chooses you because His will, His desire, has always been you. Take a breath and let that sink in. Jesus wants all of you. Right now.

Every choice we make to push Jesus away and find peace, life, and love apart from God, brings an ever-increasing amount of pain into our lives, and into the lives of others. God will use every moment of victory and disaster to unite us to Himself. And here's something all of us know but none of us want to admit, sometimes pain and brokenness is the only thing that will bring us to that tender place of choosing Jesus over all our other 'not Jesus' strategies.

Our Heavenly Father runs after us, wherever we are. Jesus joins our mess and pays for our rebellion with His death, then blesses us with His resurrection life, all to bring us close to Himself. Five times in one verse Paul tries to explain that God never tires of choosing us. He continues, giving a reason why this is true.

1:12 *in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.*

Since God saves me, since God loves all of me, since God wants all of me, I don't get the glory and praise, nor do you. The glory belongs only to Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and only to our Heavenly Father. Paul was a murderer. God wasn't uncertain about choosing Paul. God glorifies, or reveals who He is, in that choice.

But I don't want God to love the broken parts of my heart because that would mean God loves the broken parts of those who have hurt me. It's easier for me to hide and pretend I'm better so that I can have a god that hates those who are worse.

The invitation Jesus is giving us is profound: I can either have a relationship with my pain, or a relationship with my Savior who loves every beautiful and broken part of me. You are invited, right now, to make the choice to pray this with me...

Jesus, I've tied my soul to my wounds and to those who have hurt me. I can't live like this anymore and I break those chains now in Jesus' name. I choose to unite my soul with You, Jesus, and You alone. I am Your beloved child. My identity is defined by You and only You.

1:13 *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,*

God's response to our belief is remarkable. God gives you His very presence, the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we think that 'salvation' is the pinnacle, or purpose, of our experience with God. Salvation is the start. Salvation keeps happening, deeper and deeper and deeper. How?

The Holy Spirit asks you to surrender more and more and more. We will have a sign posted outside for our entire lives that says, 'Under Construction', and that's by design. The Holy Spirit's job is to minister to us, counsel us, heal us, and help us in every way.

1:14 *who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*

The Holy Spirit is the only guarantee we have in this life that God isn't finished with us. When you doubt that God wants you because of what you've done, the Holy Spirit helps you surrender. God chose you in your brokenness. Let God love you there. Look at the way Paul thanks God for his church and prays for them. Receive it as his prayer over you.

1:15 *For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. 17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.*

SMALL GROUP GROUND RULES: Tips for great conversation

- Extroverts: Please allow space and time for introverts to speak.
- Introverts: Please speak up when you have something to contribute.
- Everyone: Show respect by listening to one another, knowing that we all can learn from those who have a different perspective.