

Speaker: Senior Pastor

Title: The Challenge of Being Chosen – Conflicts of being Chosen

Scriptures: Luke 1:26-56

INTRODUCTION

- The challenge of being chosen is a calling to a life of conflicts.

(Luke 1:29 & 30)

“But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying (*conflict begins!*), and considered what manner of greeting this was.”³⁰ Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.”

- Mary was not the only virgin of her day.
 - She was a woman of faith as seen in the way she handled conflict and contradictions in her life.
 - “Conflict” means a clash of two things, in this context a clash of two natures.

(Romans 8:7)

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.”

- When you suffer for righteousness – conflict arises because of the will of God in your life.

(1 Peter 3:14-17)

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

- The challenge of conflicts comes when you are chosen.
 - Chosen to be a child of God, not necessarily for a special task or calling. All who are chosen will suffer.

(John 15:16) The Bible says:

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

- Some are chosen from the chosen to specific callings

(Matthew 22:14)

“For many are called, but few are chosen.”

- God could have called any of the virgins of her day but God chose Mary.
- God chose many others. The common factor experienced by them all was conflict.
 - * Abraham - had to leave family and country.
 - * Joseph - his brothers hated him.
 - * Moses - all first-born male children had to die.
- the stiff-necked people he had to lead.
 - * Joshua - the battles he had to fight to possess the Promised Land.
 - * Peter
 - * James - being the disciples of Jesus.
 - * John
 - * Paul - the rejection, persecution for preaching the gospel.
 - * Jesus - His parents had to hide Him at birth.
- Just as God has called and chosen you, He has also called and chosen the Church.
 - Every Church is called and chosen to do the will of God.
 - The Church does not ask for conflict but because it is chosen, it will face conflict.
 - It is like a movie where you have been cast into a certain role. Your part has been scripted and designed by God. You are chosen
 - You did not ask for it.
 - You did not seek for it.

- God choose you!

Like Jeremiah who was chosen from his mother's womb.

Chosen to be:

- Fruitful, to prosper!
 - "Seed-ful", to receive His blessings; to multiply and replenish the earth!
 - Successful, to be victors, conquerors!
 - Profitable in every area of your life, your family, work and ministry!
- But to be chosen creates conflicts.
 - When you live in sin, all of you is in agreement.
 - You are born to live with the old nature.
 - But when you are born again, there is conflict between the spirit and the flesh, faith and sight.

(Romans 8:9)

"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."

(1 Peter 2:11)

"Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,"

(Galatians 4:29)

“But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.”

Mary was chosen. She was set up for conflict (Luke 1:26-35)

She did not ask to be chosen.

She had to face shame, misunderstanding, and confrontation with Joseph.

Before this:

She was happily engaged.

She was looking forward to her marriage.

She was anticipating a normal life.

But now she faced the challenge of conflict because she was chosen – she was troubled!

- God brought the conflict

It was different with:

- Hannah who prayed for a child

(1 Samuel 1:10-11)

10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish. 11 Then she made a vow and said, “O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.”

- Rachel who said “give me children or I die”

(Genesis 30:1)

“Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, “Give me children, or else I die!”

- Mary did not ask, God gave.
 - But with conflict, God also gives grace.
 - Paul said, “God’s grace is sufficient.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)
 - Those He calls, He equips.
 - Those He chooses, He anoints e.g. David, Elijah, the Disciples.
- *Remember you are chosen to do His will.*
 - You are no longer to live after the natural man.
 - You are different.
 - You do not fit with the others.
 - You are separated from others.

(1 Corinthians 6:15-20)

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! 16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” 17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

(2 Corinthians 6:14-28)

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” 17 Therefore “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.” 18 “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.”

We are called into His blessing and “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Philippians 3:10)

“To whom much is given, from him much is also required.” (Luke 12:47)

- Mary could not keep her old lifestyle and her former friendships.
 - Her former friends won’t understand.
 - No matter what she says, it will make no sense.
 - The angel told Mary about her cousin and revealed that a similar situation had taken place in her life. (Luke 1:39-45)

Where do you go for fellowship and encouragement?
This is where the Church plays its role.

(Hebrews 10:25)

“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

A look at Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-45)

Elizabeth was now six months pregnant.

Scholars say that she was beginning to worry as there was no movement in her womb and she was fearful that she may have a dead baby.

- Mary seeks out new friendship and encouragement with those of the same faith and calling.
 - It is vital and crucial to understand this.
 - Mary reaches out for Elizabeth, her cousin- an older woman.
 - Mary’s visit causes Elizabeth’s baby to leap.
 - Mary’s conflict – how to explain and live being pregnant with a child?
 - Elizabeth’s conflict – may have a dead baby.
 - But when they met – what an explosion!
 - This should happen when we fellowship with believers and fellowship in Church.
 - Age, language, ethnic background are no barriers.
 - Our faith, our calling and being chosen links us and causes us to communicate and to fellowship as one in the Lord.
 - When God calls and when we are chosen, it will come to pass.
 - If we fellowship with those who do not cause the purpose or the will of God to come alive, examine the fellowship.
 - Connect with people who are chosen and you will find encouragement to do the will of God.

CONCLUSION

- Mary had a song to sing.
(Luke 1:46-55) “The Magnificat”

46 And Mary said: “My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
48 For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.
49 For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is
His name.
50 And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to
generation.
51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud
in the imagination of their hearts.
52 He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly.
53 He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has
sent away empty.
54 He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy,
55 As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.”

- Elizabeth experienced a miracle.

(Luke 1:41-42)

41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

- Elizabeth’s husband prophesied at the birth of their son.

(Luke 1:67-79)

67 Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and
prophesied, saying:
68 “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and
redeemed His people,
69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David,
70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world
began,
71 That we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us,
72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy
covenant,
73 The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:
74 To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve
Him without fear,
75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.
76 “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before
the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,
77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins,
78 Through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high
has visited us;
79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our
feet into the way of peace.”

Questions to ponder:

- How many come together with fellow Christians and experience a leap in your spirit and soul?
- How many go with faith to believe God for your struggles and conflicts?
- Do you need God to fill you with the Holy Spirit for you to experience a leap of faith and joy?