



Sermon: Chosen in Love, Chosen to Love – Todd Goldschmidt

Sunday Service 10:15 am – May 13th, 2012 – At [Living Hope Lutheran Church](#)

Lesson/Sermon Text: John 15:9-17 – (NIV 1984)

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit —fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

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Summer Sunday Worship Service: 9:30 A.M. (June thru September 2nd)

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Moms know that the school playground is the last place they want their son or daughter to be if they're the smallest, weakest or least agile. Captains don't think much about a kid's feelings when picking teams. They want the fastest, strongest and most skilled. They want players who are most likely to give them a victory. The weak only get to play because you have to fill all the positions. As far as the athletic kids are concerned, it's an unfortunate necessity. Moms often help their kids navigate such waters: they lend a sympathetic ear, dry tears and give wise advice.

Thank God that He doesn't operate His Church like a schoolyard! Jesus doesn't pick us because we're wiser, stronger, richer or smarter than others. Jesus chooses us because He loves us. And it's His intention for us that we would not only experience that same love that He did from the Father, but that we'd be willing and empowered by His love to love others the way He loves us.

CHOSEN IN LOVE—CHOSEN TO LOVE! THAT'S US!

"The Father has loved me," Jesus begins. Love within the Trinity is the foundation for all love. Before Creation, the Father loved His Son. That love continued throughout Jesus' earthly life. Two key events that "bookend" Jesus' ministry prove that point: At the waters of the Jordan, Jesus was anointed by the Spirit while the Father said, "This is my Son, *whom I love*; with him I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). Jesus headed into His temptation at Satan's hands certain of His Father's approval. The other occurred on the Mount of Transfiguration, as Jesus was about to enter the toughest leg of the mission He'd set out to accomplish. Peter wrote that "on that sacred mountain, Jesus received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, *whom I love*; with him I am well pleased'" (2 Peter 1:17-18).

Jesus needed that confidence and encouragement, since He wouldn't feel the Father's love during His time of deepest need. While mid-day darkness enveloped the earth, Jesus cried out in despair, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It was then that Jesus performed the deepest acts of His redeeming love: He endured the agony and torment of hell that we deserved; bore the full weight of our sins and guilt; and demonstrated the "greatest love of all by laying down his life for his friends." "It is finished," He cried in triumph before embracing His death.

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Love motivated God to form mankind so that He'd have precious souls to share His love with. To that end, John exclaims, "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are" (1 John 3:1). Jesus picked us to be His children before He created the world! In our text, Jesus says, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last." We need that reminder when Satan, the Accuser, whispers to our wounded soul: "You call yourself a child of God? Do you really think that He still loves you and wants you in His family after what you did?" When that happens—and it does for all of us—we can answer: "Get lost, Satan! Jesus didn't choose me because I'm lovable, but because He is love. He chose me before you even existed. He lived, died and rose again to secure my place in His family. I'm His and He's mine! You can't robe me of my joy!"

Jesus tells us: "remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." Last week we learned that to "remain in Jesus" means to stay in His Word and Sacraments. Thru those Means of Grace, as we Lutherans like to call them, the Spirit nourishes and strengthens our trust in Christ and His promises and empowers our obedience to His will. Christian moms often take the lead in teaching their little ones these sacred truths. They see to it that prayers are said, Bible stories read, and Christ-like love is practiced within the home. Moms tend to spend more time with their growing children and are the ones that those children often turn to for advice, encouragement and consolation. To that end, wise Solomon counseled: "My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching" (Prov. 6:20). Many of us, like Timothy, were taught "the Holy Scriptures from infancy" on our mother's lap or our grandmother's knee so that we might be "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). More than one of us had Mom for a SS teacher!

Speaking of which, my wife's Sunday School class made gifts for their moms for Mother's Day. They're plaques similar to this one our son, Jordan, made for her when he was about their age. It says, "Suzanne Marie Monda Goldschmidt: Loving, Caring, Wonderful. Always there for me, always smiling, always fun to be around. Mom." Four 4th and 5th graders—all boys too, mind you—had these things to say about their special moms (in no particular order): "Amazing cook, perfect protector, hard working. Always there for me, always helps me on hard homework problems, always comforting. Mom." "Safe, beautiful, awesome. Always there for me, always keeps me safe, always gorgeous to me. Mom." "Loving, helpful, safe. Always there for me, always comforting, always grateful for everything. Mom." And last but not least, "Hard worker,

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loving, heroic. Always caring, always kind, always helpful. Mom.” Each plaque concluded with Proverbs 31:28: “Her children arise and call her blessed.” Moms truly are the unsung heroes of the home front, the glue that holds their families together, the stitch in time that saves nine. They deserve praise and respect from their children daily for who they are & all they do!

Loved by God, chosen in love by Him before the beginning of time, we joyfully respond with lives of love toward others. There really is no greater joy on earth than living our lives to God’s glory and to the good of our fellow man—just like Jesus did! Is it easy? No. But it gets easier the more you do it. This life is our opportunity to make a difference—an everlasting difference—in the lives of others. It’s our chance to participate in the greatest plan of all: God’s redeeming rescue of fallen mankind! What a privilege! What an honor! We’re not only God’s children, the Bible tells us, but we’re His heirs! The crown of everlasting life awaits us in heaven! We’re Jesus’ joy-filled friends! His dearly-loved sons and daughters! As such, we love like He does: with an unconditional, self-sacrificing spirit that considers others better than ourselves; with a love that puts their needs and interests above our own. Much like caring Christian mothers do when it comes to the children God has blessed them with. “Mother is the name for God in the lips and hearts of little children,” William Makepeace Thackeray well said. God’s children—chosen in love—chosen to love! That’s us! Amen.

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