

**A Stop by Quiet Waters**  
**By**  
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**“Chosen by God!”**

One morning recently I began my Bible reading but was stopped by a statement from Paul as soon as I started: “*This letter is from Paul, chosen by God to be an apostle....*” I had read this many times but I had never been arrested by it as I was this time. I asked myself, “What does it mean to be chosen by God? What are the implications of being chosen by God to be or do something?”

The first thing it meant for Paul was that God had changed the course of his life. God put his hand on Paul to be something he was not before he had been chosen. Paul chose for himself the life of a Pharisee, a religious leader, a rising star in the ranks of the Sanhedrin, a zealous defender of Judaism, a man on a self-appointed mission. But now he was an apostle, a man chosen by God to do a specific work on His behalf.

To be chosen by God means a great deal more than just having the direction of your life changed from what you were pursuing to what God has called you to. I know God called me to be a pastor. You feel God called you to be a pastor also, or whatever it is you feel led by Him to be and do. What are the implications for us? As I pondered this question, one thought after another came flooding into my mind, and I want to share them with you for your encouragement.

**To be chosen by God** gave Paul boldness in his work which at times may have looked like arrogance to others, but for Paul it was simply the consequence of the conviction that he was what God had chosen him to be. When you know God has chosen you for a work you can face it, and all the obstacles in your way, with boldness and confidence because God is in it with you. We should not be arrogant, but neither should we go around like a puppy with her tail between her legs, or making apology for who we are and what we are seeking to do.

**To be chosen by God** declares God has a specific thing in mind for you to do. He put you in that position because He has something he wants you to do in that place, not someone else. Even though another might be able to do it He has called *you* to it. It is a ministry given you from God and you can do it in a way no other person can. Only Zechariah could be the father of John the Baptist, only Joseph could be the second in command to Pharaoh, only you can be the pastor or Christian leader in the place God has you to at present.

**To be chosen by God** for a work means it is an important part of the work of His kingdom, whatever it is. You and that work are both important to God! Do not equate size or numbers or dollars or prominence with significance. Do not compare your work with what He has called someone else to be or do because **this** is your call from God. Never allow yourself, or anyone else, to belittle your work, for God assigned it to you. You have been chosen by God to carry out a mission for Him.

**To be chosen by God** carries with it the promise that He will equip you to be what He has chosen you to be. For example, he would never choose you to be a pastor and not equip you with pastoral gifts and aptitude. This does not mean that you can trust in yourself to fulfill your calling, but it does mean you can trust God to enable you to pastor successfully no matter how challenging or difficult the position. Whatever you need in that call God will, in some way, provide. He will supply you with the resources

necessary to accomplish the task, no matter how difficult it is or how long it will take. These resources are not necessarily just dropped in our laps. For example, He provides co-workers to labor with us, but we are responsible to build the relationships by which they become true co-workers.

I have discovered that oftentimes He equips us for the task as we enter into the task. For example, He may have given you the gift of public speaking to enable you to stand before your congregation to feed and challenge them from the Scripture, but that does not mean you don't need to work hard at developing your speaking skills. For the first twenty years of my pastoral work I recorded every sermon I preached, then listened to it the following week and took notes on what I said and did, how I said it, etc., to learn how to become a better preacher. Every two or three years I also purchased another book on preaching and studied it carefully to learn all I could.

**To be chosen by God** implies that He will never leave you alone in the mission, for it is not your work but His put into your hands. He will be as present to you as a trainer is to an athlete. He wants the job done right so He will be with you to oversee it and to encourage you to keep at it.

**To be chosen by God** asserts that He will lead you in the work. He knows that you cannot see many of the implications of what He calls you to do, and that if you are left to yourself you will not succeed, for oftentimes you will not know what to do next, or in what direction to go. You cannot simply look at another in a similar position and do the same things, for your circumstances are never identical to those of another. Stress and burnout in the ministry often come from having objectives and goals that are not from God but of our own choosing. God is not interested in helping us fulfill what we think is a good work for Him if he has not called us to that work.

We can learn general principles from one another, but when it comes to the specifics of our situations, they will be different. Both Peter and Paul were called to be apostles, but they could not simply copy one another for God had a different work for each of them. On his second missionary trip, Paul kept trying to go in the wrong direction and the Holy Spirit kept shutting doors until he ended up in Troas where he had the vision of the Macedonian man calling him to come over there and help them.

**To be chosen by God** avows that He will give you the wisdom you need to fulfill the call. In fact, He has already given it to you, for it is in the Scriptures in practice or precept or principle. It is your responsibility to faithfully read and carefully study the Bible in order to gain what God has put there for you and then to apply it to your situation. The longer you are in a particular place and the more you search the Scriptures for the wisdom of God the more effective you will be in that call.

Other sources of wisdom God has for us are church history and in the insights and counsel of trusted friends and mentors. If you need wisdom for a particular situation and don't have it, you can call on God and He will, in one way or another, provide it. James discovered this and wrote, "*If you need wisdom — if you want to know what God wants you to do — ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.*" <sup>James 1:5 NLT</sup> Why should He resent us asking Him, for He has put us in the situation and knows it is beyond our ability on our own. One of my greatest joys in serving God is the deep-seated conviction that He is with me in the work He has called me to.

If you are truly chosen by God for the ministry you are seeking to do, your success is inevitable in God's eyes, for He knows what He has called you to, and He will provide everything you need for success in that call. Your responsibility is to keep your eyes on Him. Do not be distracted or discouraged by the success of those around you, for you have been chosen by God to be where you are not where they are. Be faithful to the call, and leave the consequences with God.

Peace and joy in Christ,

Dick Germaine

Scripture Resources

*“This letter is from Paul, chosen by God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. . .” Colossians 1:1 NLT*

*“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10 NIV*

*“No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.” Joshua 1:5 NIV*

*“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5 NIV*

*“May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Hebrews 13:20-21 NIV*

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV*