

A WORD ON WORSHIP

Review of Message from August 28, 2016

BY PASTOR ANDREW KICKERT, SUNRISE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Genesis 12:1-3

“Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you, and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”



We don't know much about most of Shem's descendants but we do know something about Terah, Abraham's father. In Joshua 24:2 the Lord says, "From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, namely, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods." Abraham came from a pagan family, and was probably an idolater himself when God called him. In fact, even three generations later, when Rachel stole her father's household gods, the family was still into idolatry.

God's sovereign choice never depends on human merit. He didn't look down from heaven and say, "There's a good man; I'll choose him." Rather, God only chooses and calls sinners to Himself. Abraham was a sinner. God chose him simply because of grace, apart from anything God foresaw in Abraham. If God chose Abraham because He foresaw that Abraham would believe, then Abraham could boast in his faith as the reason God chose him. But salvation, from start to finish, is all from God, not at all from man.

C. H. Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher of the past century, was once preaching to a Methodist congregation. During the first part of his sermon, the people were nodding in agreement and saying, "Amen!" and "Hallelujah!" Then Spurgeon came to the doctrine of election and noticed a distinct change in the mood of his audience. (Methodists do not accept that doctrine.) So he proceeded to put it to them this way. He asked, "Is there any difference between you and others who have not been converted?" They responded, "Yes, glory to God! There is a difference." Then Spurgeon asked, "Who has made the difference, yourself or God?" "The Lord," they said. Spurgeon shot back, "Yes, and that is the doctrine of election; that if there be a difference, the Lord made the difference."

The point is, God didn't choose Abraham because he was a good man. He chose Abraham to demonstrate His grace. He doesn't choose anyone because they deserve it. He only chooses sinners who deserve His judgment. And while that's a blow to our sinful pride, it is actually very good news. It means that you cannot do anything to qualify yourself for God's salvation. You can only come to God confessing your sin and asking for His mercy, and He will grant it because He is a merciful God. God's plan of salvation involves His choice according to His grace.

Sunrise Community Church
Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst
EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.

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