

Casting Your Lot

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Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning?!

A few weeks ago, we finished up another great Vacation Bible School!

One of the things we did to promote attendance during that week was to give away new bicycles to two “lucky” kids.

How did we do it? How did we choose who to give those flashy new bikes to?

We used a form of an age-old method; we cast lots.

For every night of attendance each kid got his/her name placed in a basket.

For each guest they brought, they got their name placed in the basket again.

On the last night of Bible School, we mixed up all the names and drew out two, a boy and a girl. those two lucky kids got the bicycles.

The more guests they brought, the more chances to win.

A variation of this system was often used in olden times.

Proverbs 16:33 tells us of how they used to cast lots in olden times.

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.

Each man would take a pebble marked to identify him and all the pebbles would be cast into the lap of the loose robe of some neutral party. The pebbles would be stirred around and then one pebble would be drawn.

This system was used or referred to about three dozen times in the Bible.

It is how Joshua chose which part of the promised land would be given to what tribe.

It is how the Roman soldiers chose which one of them would get Jesus' robe when they had crucified him.

We have all used many variations of this many times, giving away bicycles, door prizes, various games, and the like.

So, let me ask you, what do you believe? Is it luck or chance or destiny or fate; or is there more to who gets picked for what?

If you each write your name on a white marble and cast it into someone's lap, or pieces of paper in a basket, who or what will determine which one gets drawn for the bicycle?

I know what we are programmed to think, but what does the Bible say?

You just read it; the Bible says that it is the Lord who chooses which name gets picked.

What if you had a way that you could influence the Lord as He chooses which name is picked?

Some of you are planning to get married and planning to start a family; that is a scary thing. What if you could do something about how your marriage will turn out?

Some of you are venturing into new jobs and new business opportunities; what if you could truly influence how that new career turns out?

Tomorrow morning when you get up and YOU go off to work or off to school or whatever it is; you are casting your lot.

You are likely doing whatever it is you are going to do in the hope of some progress or some good or some gain that will come of it.

Some of you will do things you don't like to do or things you don't want to do or things you know you shouldn't do; because you think you have no choice.

I understand there are always aspects of what we do in life that are not necessarily pleasant; like paperwork for instance; yet life in the Lord is not meant to be just labor and misery; and certainly not loss and defeat.

You pray, you do everything you can to influence how the lot you cast will turn out; the problem is, we're just not smart enough to know which pebble to choose!

You cast your lot every single day that you live, but **it is the Lord that determines the whole disposing thereof!**

It is not that hard for believers to accept this as a fact? We know who is really in control of everything, don't we?

That is why we pray, asking the One with all the power to step in on our behalf. Then all too often we forget the part that says to wait on the Lord, and we try to handle it ourselves.

The next question from a wise man or woman ought to be "what can I do to really influence how all these things turn out"?

What if you could cast your lot like you do every day and then turn it over to someone Who really loves you, Who also has the power to determine the outcome?

Do you believe the Lord is committed to you and that He seeks your good?

Do you believe the Lord is able to handle the outcome of whatever you are involved in?

Maybe a better question would be:

Do you actually want the kind of outcome that the Lord would choose for you if you actually placed Him in charge?

We cannot determine the outcome; this we have already proven.

But we can place the Lord in charge; He has made it simple enough and He is willing to do this for us!

There are three passages of scripture that tell us what to do in order to influence the Lord as He indeed does determine the whole disposition of each lot that is cast:

In the Bible, there are three commitments that we are admonished to make.

Some of you have made all three of these and you are living the absolute best life has to offer.

Some of you have begun but need to act on the rest.

Perhaps some have not begun at all.

These commitments must be made in order, this does not work any other way.

The first one is in Psalm 31:5:

I. Commit thy spirit unto the Lord.

Psalm 31:5 Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

A. Committing your spirit unto the Lord is talking about getting saved!

1. Until we are saved, our spirit is “dead in trespasses and sins”.

2. **Ephesians 2:1** And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

3. These Ephesians were not physically dead; they were spiritually dead just like every other lost person.

4. Physically dead people can't do anything about being dead, neither can those who are spiritually dead; but thankfully, Jesus can!

5. When you placed your trust in Jesus to save you, you actually committed your spirit unto Him to do what He and only He can do and that is to give you new life.

B. If you are here in this place today and you have not yet been saved; the following is likely true:

1. Up to now you have likely not wanted the Lord to be in charge of the outcome as you cast your lot every day; even though He is charge, whether you know it - or like it - or not.

2. Maybe now you are starting to feel differently about that.

3. For those of us who know the Lord, it is hard to imagine why anyone would not want to be a real Christian; especially after we have watched the Lord at work in our lives for a while.

B. Sometimes it takes hitting bottom to figure out that we really need Jesus to be in charge of our lives.

1. David testified to this in his own life:

Psalm 31:9-13

9 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, *yea*, my soul and my belly.

10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.

11 I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbors, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.

13 For I have heard the slander of many: fear *was* on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

2. Then David came to the Lord!

Psalm 31:14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my God.

3. You really ought to rethink staying unsaved.

4. Aside from the two small details of spending eternity in heaven and not spending eternity in hell; the Lord is just a better master than the one you have now!

5. When you place your trust in Jesus to save you, you are committing your spirit into His hand.

6. Your spirit, which is dead in sins, will be made alive by the power of God; then Jesus takes over. Wow! What a difference!

C. Getting saved is such a huge step that sometimes we think, "Yes! Now I have arrived!"

1. In some ways that is true.

2. Real trust in Jesus, committing your spirit unto Him, being raised from the spiritual dead never to be condemned again is a great arrival all right; however:

3. It is really just the beginning.

The second passage we will go to is

Psalm 37:5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass.

II. Commit thy way unto the Lord.

A. Committing your way unto the Lord is a life-defining moment; in some ways much like the moment you got saved.

1. Committing your way unto the Lord is talking about your road, your path in life; this one here on earth.

a. This is about choosing how you are going to live your life.

b. Things like Baptism and Church membership, commitment to Faithful attendance, reading and studying your Bible.

2. Salvation is so big, so grand, so awesome, so wonderful, this second step often gets too little attention.

3. There are many commitments required of us in life; marriage, a mortgage, a car loan, your job; promises made; these are all commitments in which you commit yourself to a duty, task or an obligation.

4. We are all used to these kinds of commitments in which the burden of that commitment lies upon us.

B. Both salvation and this business of committing our way unto the Lord are different in that the burden does not rest upon you.

1. The burden and the responsibility of these two life-defining commitments are not upon you.

2. Yes, you must make the commitment; but the responsibility to make it all happen, the final disposing thereof, is the Lord's, not yours.

3. It is the Lord's commitment to you that is going to take you to heaven, and it is the Lord's commitment to you that will prosper the road in front of you with success and blessing.

4. Paul spoke of this commitment in

2 Timothy 1:12 ...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

C. That word "way" means a road, a path.

1. Committing your way to the Lord is a decision to walk the road that He chooses for you.

2. You've been walking the path of your choice; you are familiar with that path; how's that been working out for you?

3. Just look at the degree of promise that comes with this commitment:

4. **Psalm 37:1-9** *A Psalm of David.*

1 Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 **Commit thy way unto the LORD;** trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass.

6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

- 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.
- 9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

5. If you are saved and you have never actually gotten on your knees and committed yourself to walk the road the Lord has for you, you ought to do this very thing before you leave this place today.

6. I am your Pastor because a very long time ago I committed my way unto the Lord.

7. You could word it a lot of different ways: “Okay, Lord, I will do anything you ask.”

8. For you to hold out on making this commitment is acting just like that lost person you’ve been praying for holding out on trusting Jesus to save him.

There is one final commitment left to make that will assure the outcome of your path:

III. Commit thy works to the Lord.

Proverbs 16:3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

A. There is a basic truth revealed in this text that some of us have a hard time accepting:

1. **Proverbs 16:4** The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

2. You were made for the Lord; lost or saved, you belong to Him.

3. **Colossians 1:16-19**

16 For by him [Jesus] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fullness dwell;

4. If you are saved, you are double bought; He owns you because He made you and He owns you again because He bought you!

5. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

6. 1 Corinthians 7:23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

B. We are now full circle back to the same principle we started with.

1. Proverbs 16:1-9

1 The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

4 The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 Every one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be unpunished.

6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.

7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

8 Better *is* a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

9 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

2. It is ultimately the Lord that determines the outcome of every lot you cast.

3. Do you want it to turn out well? Then live for Jesus, not yourself; it is as simple as that.

4. Only Jesus can control the outcome.

C. All through the scriptures the Lord uses the analogy of the marriage to describe His relationship to us.

1. Israel in the Old Testament.

2. The Church as the Bride of Christ in the New Testament.

3. The mutual commitments of husband and wife in the book of Ephesians.

4. It boils down to this; the husband is there wholly for the good and care and benefit of the wife.

5. Likewise, the wife is there wholly for the good and care and benefit of the husband.

6. This is the level of commitment to which the Lord is inviting you today.

In Conclusion: Three things:

1. Commit your spirit unto the Lord; He will save you all by Himself without any help or participation from you. Then...

2. Commit your way unto the Lord; He will show you where to go and what to do and prosper your way as you journey. And finally...

3. Commit your works unto the Lord; He will thereby establish your thoughts and thus your new thinking will change everything about you.

That new you will be able to live for Jesus;

That new you will be able to honor the Lord.

That new you will love your new life.

Oh, how simple:

Get saved.

Commit yourself to live your life His way.

Then get busy in what He shows you and commands you to do.

Then you can watch God bring it all to pass!