

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

John 15:16 "God Chose You!"

Rev. Craig Michaelson, Faith Community Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, Nevada

lutheransforlife.org

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Life is filled with so many choices! And depending upon where you live in the world, you may have a greater volume and variety of choices than others have. In America, we have choices that people in other parts of the world, especially third-world countries, couldn't even imagine.

From the moment the alarms ring in the morning until the moment our heads hit our pillows at night, our days are filled with choices. Will I get up or hit snooze on the alarm? Will I have breakfast or skip it? What will I wear? What will I do today? If I leave home, will I do homework or yardwork or housework when I get home? Will I use an app to have dinner delivered or will I dine out or will I fix dinner at home? Will I watch TV or read a book or go out? Will I go to bed early or late?

So many choices! And for the most part, these choices may seem insignificant, maybe with the exception of struggling to choose what to do for dinner. "What do you want to do for dinner?" "I don't know, what do you want to do?" Someone choose!

Not all choices are insignificant. Many choices we make are significant. And they can have life-changing consequences for us and for others. Especially if we fail to allow God to guide our choices.

Can you think of a time when you regretted a choice you made after you saw how selfish and damaging that choice was? If we are honest with ourselves, we've all been there and done that. And we and others have the physical and emotional scars to prove it.

We are also in good company with the rest of humanity, going all the way back to the first human being God created.

"The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die'" (Genesis 2:15-17).

God gave Adam and Eve so many choices in the Garden of Eden. They could eat from a wide variety of trees. At the same time, God made their choices simple. Just avoid eating from one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Make your choice in line with God's will, and you will live. Make your choice outside of God's will, and you will die. The choice was simple until Satan slithered into the garden.

Sadly, Adam and Eve chose to listen to Satan's voice and their inner voices instead of God's voice. And by choosing not to follow God's way, they chose to follow the way of sin and death. And their sin-filled DNA has passed on to every one of us.

Adam and Eve's choice was simple. They only had to choose to avoid one tree. Our choices don't always seem so simple, do they? And in our time and culture, we are bombarded with so many choices. The sheer volume of choices we face can be overwhelming. And more and more of these choices come with significant consequences.

Add to that the choices that confront us because technology and science often race ahead with life-altering choices before our culture can consider the potential consequences those choices will have on us and others. Just because we could choose to do something doesn't mean we should choose to do something, especially before we know the consequence of that choice.

But, like Adam and Eve, we often find ourselves playing god, thinking we know better than our Creator what to do with our lives and the lives of others. We make wrong choices

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

John 15:16 "God Chose You!"

Rev. Craig Michaelson, Faith Community Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, Nevada

lutheransforlife.org

because we are guided by convenience and comfort and control instead of by the conviction that God is in control and His Word offers us the courage and clarity we need to make the right choices. And these wrong choices come back to bite us, just like they did with Adam and Eve.

Thankfully, the God who chose to create us chose not to let us die in our sin. He chose instead to redeem us so we could be reconciled to Him. God came looking for Adam and Eve in their garden of sin and death and despair, and He gave them hope when He said to the serpent Satan: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (Genesis 3:15 NIV).

For all the times our life choices have crushed us with guilt and shame and regret, God chose to send His Son to crush Satan and be our Savior!

The God who chose to give us life at the moment of fertilization is the same God who chose to rescue us and redeem us and give us salvation. And He did it by sending His Son, Jesus, to experience every stage of human life so we could be forgiven and given life everlasting with Him!

Jesus could have chosen to remain in the comfort and glory of heaven and left us to deal with the consequences of our choices. And who could blame Him for choosing to do that?

But because of His love and compassion for all of us, Jesus chose to become one of us so He could provide salvation for all of us.

Jesus chose to be conceived by the Holy Spirit, to be born of the Virgin Mary, to suffer under Pontius Pilate, to be crucified, to die and to be buried ... for us. And three days later, Jesus chose to rise from the dead ... for us. Jesus chose to rescue us and restore us so we could be God's forgiven children and heirs of life everlasting in the new heavens and new earth.

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

John 15:16 “God Chose You!”

Rev. Craig Michaelson, Faith Community Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, Nevada

lutheransforlife.org

Aren't you thankful that Jesus chose to do that for you and me and the world?!

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit” (John 15:16).

In love and grace, God chose you before the creation of the world to be His children. In Baptism, we were claimed by God the Father to be His children, we were connected to the saving work of His Son, and we were converted into temples of the Holy Spirit.

The God who created us and redeemed us and lives in us has put His seal of ownership on us! He has chosen us and appointed us for a purpose—to live as Jesus' disciples by bearing fruit for His kingdom. By God's grace, and with His help, may we bear good fruit and make God-pleasing choices that glorify God who chose to create us and save us!

In Jesus' name. Amen.