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## “He Chose You”

Galatians 4:4-7

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. 6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.”

Galatians 4:4-7 (NIV)

### Children’s Sermon:

**Needed:** *A Wastebasket full of trash, with figurines from a manger hidden inside.*

Guess what I got for Christmas! I got a wastebasket...and it’s full of trash! Have you ever had this for a Christmas gift? It’s a neat gift. Do you know why? Because whenever you want a present, all you have to do is put your hand into the wastebasket, and pull something out. Let me demonstrate.

Does anyone else want to try? Why not? Because you don’t know what you’re going to get, right? I think everyone would agree that it’s more fun to reach into something for something you want to have, not trash, right?

God thinks so too. That’s why God chose you. He didn’t want trash. He wanted people, children—like you and me. And He wanted us so much that He spent lots of time preparing to send us Jesus. And, when the time was right, He sent Jesus on Christmas to save you and me.

Do you know what Jesus does? He reaches in to this wastebasket to save people like this (reach in for a shepherd)...shepherd and like this (reach in for a Wiseman)..Wiseman. Do you know what, if Jesus would reach into a wastebasket to save a shepherd and a Wiseman? Because He loves them.

What do you think Jesus would do to show His love for us? Would he reach into a wastebasket to find you? Ah, much more than that! He’d die on the cross for you and me.

And that’s what He did, didn’t He. Jesus really does love us. And He loves us so much that He chose you and me to be His children forever. Wow!

### Sermon:

One of the neatest things I’ve gotten this Christmas is a anonymous poem called, “1 Corinthians 13: A Christmas Version.”

## 1 Corinthians 13: A Christmas Version

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I am just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, care in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing. If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful that they are there to be in the way. Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure.

This poem best says what Christmas is all about. It's about love. More specifically, it's about God's love for you and me...and how God, in His love, chose you and me to be His.

And what a choice it was! Any of us who have had children know how difficult it is to prepare for a new baby. There are doctor appointments to keep, shopping trips to make, birthing classes to attend, updating and renovations of rooms, buying clothes and otherwise doing all kinds of things to prepare for the baby.

Certainly all of these things are labors of love. It's all part of the excitement of expecting a new child. Grandparents, also, are not immune to this excitement.

But, amid all the excitement, there's one dimension to expecting a child that makes the experience unique: time. There's only nine months, at most, to prepare for a child. And, with each passing month, the time gets more precious and things get more anxious.

When there's only a few more weeks or days left, it's time that becomes the most important thing on a parent's mind. When will the baby be born? In the morning or at night? Will I make it to the hospital? How long with the delivery take? And, will I have everything set to take the baby home to a room that's done...and ready.

Yes, it's all about time.

God, the Father, didn't do any shopping or make doctor appointments for the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, Jesus' birth was at least as much about time as the birth of any other child. Indeed, Jesus' birth was far more time-sensitive than we can imagine.

St. Paul understood that. That's why he wrote,

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,  
5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. 6 Because you

are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."

All this happened at the right time...at *just* the right time.

At just the right time...God sent His son.

At just the right time...God redeemed us

At just the right time, God's son was born under the law to be our substitute

And just the right time, God's Son, Jesus Christ, made us HIS sons and daughters.

And what a time it was! It was *just* the right time. And that time is now. And timing is everything!!!

The following epitaph was found on Harry Edsel Smith's tombstone in Albany, New York.

Harry Edsel Smith  
Born 1903 - Died 1942.  
Looked up the elevator shaft to see  
if the car was on the way down.  
It was.

Looks like his timing was off by just a little bit...and it cost him his life.

God's timing is everything...and it was just perfect! But, God's perfect timing didn't save His life. It cost Him His life.

That's the message of Christmas. Not just that God gave us the remarkable gift of His Son. But Christmas means that God gave us His greatest gift—His own life—for you and me. Yes, God chose to die and He chose to die for you and me. And the timing couldn't have been better!

A kindly 90-year-old grandmother found buying presents for family and friends a bit much one Christmas, so she wrote out checks for all of them to put in their Christmas cards.

In each card she wrote, "Buy your own present" and then sent them off.

After the Christmas festivities were over, she found the checks in her desk! Everyone had gotten a Christmas card from her with "Buy your own present" written inside, but without the checks!

This woman *almost* gave the perfect Christmas gift. It was generous, it was from love, and it was on time. She just forgot one thing: the check.

St. Paul tells us that God's gift was generous, from love and on time. And, best of all, He didn't forget the greatest benefit. Since God chose us, now we are His children—His "sons."

## “He Chose You”—Galatians 4:4-7

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“Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.” Galatians 4:6-7 (NIV)

What great news! Not only did God chose us. We’re heirs of everything He has to give us. And the greatest part of His inheritance is His love for you and me.

Not a bad inheritance, either! And, since God considers us His children—and not slaves—there’s lots more to that inheritance, too!

Several years ago Ginghamburg Church in the Dayton, Ohio area went out into their community just weeks before Christmas asking, “What do you think is the greatest need in the world today?”

Some answered, “Money.” Others answered, “love and understanding.” thers answered,  
?? “Peace, peace for everybody, peace within their own heart.”  
?? “Is to put these homeless people in homes.”  
?? “The greatest need is probably hope, I mean everybody needs hope.”  
?? “The greatest need in the world today is to help people who can’t really help themselves.”  
?? “Getting along with man.”  
?? “I think it’s hunger, you know, the people that need to be fed.”  
?? “I don’t know, I’m not going to get into it.”

What is our greatest need? “A need to know God. In the fullness of time, God took care of that need...at just the right time.

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. 6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.”

Galatians 4:4-7 (NIV)

God chose you. You are His child. And just in time. That’s the greatest gift we could have!  
Amen.

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