

December 11, 2024



Daily Reflections

THE CHOSEN

By Elisabeth Beall

Today's First Reading

*It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you
and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain,
so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.*

JOHN 15:16

Reflection

Our extended family is in a season of flux; many of our loved ones are striving to move in a new direction – or simply to hang on to their status quo. While talking about some of the younger generation in the family, my husband made a comment about how difficult it can be to fit in. How true that is! And how very much of life is taken up by the effort to fit in: to make friends, to find a potential spouse, to be successful on the job, to use our talents in local organizations, the wider community, our community of faith.

All of us want to be chosen. It's a good feeling to gather with a group of friends and know that they all care for and support you. It's a beautiful thing when your love is reciprocated. It's a thrill to land the job you sought out or the promotion you worked for.

But we are human, and those feelings of victory and delight can be short-lived. A friendship can turn sour, a new boss can stifle enthusiasm for a job, a romantic partner may decide to move on to greener pastures. It's all incredibly disappointing – sometimes devastating.

The good news is that each one of us is Chosen – big picture, writ large, for eternity – by God. God chose to create each one of us to be uniquely who we are. God chose to place us where we are in the world, and to bless us with gifts to use in that place and time.

In earlier verses in this chapter of John, Jesus tells his disciples: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. ... Remain in me, as I remain in you.” (John 15:1-2, 4)

God nurtures us and encourages us to grow; but this relationship doesn't run only one way. Just as Jesus commands his disciples to remain in him, so must we follow the loving hand of the vine grower. God has chosen us, but we must also choose God – and each day make that choice afresh, lest we become like the lackadaisical friend or the disheartened employee who drifts away from the relationship, leaving behind an ugly void.



Image by lilkar

For Pondering

- Read aloud slowly John 15:9-17. Which words or phrases speak to you? Which words or phrases can you hold in your heart today?
- Recall a time when you felt chosen or wanted; then recall a time when you felt as though you were not wanted. What did you learn from these experiences? How have they impacted your relationship with God and others?
- How can you choose God today?

For Prayer

A Prayer to the Potter

*Dear Potter,
The lump of clay that I am*

*keeps crying for some form
day by day
I yearn for you to mold me.*

*This is a trust-song, Lord
I am in your hands like clay
I am ready to be transformed:*

*I expect
to be molded
I expect
to be beautiful
I expect
to be loved.*

*And if by chance
someone should drop me
as your apprentices sometimes do,*

*I expect
to be hurt.*

*I'm just trying to say
I have surrendered
to your dream for me
I am in your hands
like clay.*

MACRINA WIEDERKEHR

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