

I am honored to be in this pulpit trying to encourage you this morning. Any pulpit! Anywhere! is an honor for me. A tent in Goldfield Nevada will do fine.

The guys who put this together believe in freedom. Sometimes such an expansive freedom, it isn't helpful. Jesus is Calling. Jesus is Calling. What would you like me to speak on? Any direction at all? Nope. Something that has to do with those 3 words. Jesus Is Calling . . .

So, that's what you're gonna get. In the most round about illogical way you could imagine.

Caution! You may find the words of this book offensive. I may offend some this morning. You may not see me here next year! All of the above is OK.

I prayed over what to choose for this special day. I don't get asked to speak out of my own pulpit very often. OK, never. So, in thinking about this and praying about what to say, I've asked God for direction since Mike and Ray were useless.

Jesus Is Calling. What do you want me to say about that Lord?

No one was more surprised than me at where He lead me. Say this;

Malachi Chapter 1 (nasb)

Pre-Destination, election and the Justice of God 4 the Glory of God

1The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.

2“I have loved you,” says the LORD. But you say, “How have You loved us?” “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob; 3but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness.” 4Though Edom says, “We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins”; thus says the LORD of hosts,

“They may build, but I will tear down; and men will call them the wicked territory, and the people toward whom the LORD is indignant forever.” 5Your eyes will see this and you will say, “The LORD be magnified beyond the border of Israel!”

Jacob I have loved;
Esau I have hated.

I have been a christian for 44 years as of august of last year. You start out on this journey, and the bible is like a puzzle. You begin putting pieces together and little by little the big picture begins to take shape.

After a long while, most of the pieces are in place. *I've been blessed to sit under some of the best teachers of ours or any generation. My systematic theology is pretty solid.

(interjection) Advertisement. On our web pages at tonopahchurch.org, if you hover over the "about" tab you will see a page titled "What We Teach & Links 2 Sound Doctrine". If you click on that a page of links will appear. These links will take you to a veritable feast of preaching. A banquet. I encourage you to go and listen to men like John Piper, John MacArthur. Ligon Duncan. Al Mohler. R. C. Sproule. The T4G conferences. Shepherds conference. Summit on Biblical Inerrancy. A feast of preaching. *

But for most of those 40 years when this subject came up; I approached it like a guy in a 2 wheel drive sedan approaches a mud bog with giant 4 wheel drive machines out there slinging mud. I was happy to watch from a distance, but nobody with a 2 wheel drive sedan ventures into that, right?

But these last couple of years, God has begun to open these things up to me, and I find this topic fascinating. I'm interested! These are some of the last pieces of the puzzle, and I'd love to see them in their places.

So you get to spend at least one session with me in the mud bog. Fasten your seat belt, put on your crash helmet, and pull down your face sheild.

Don't be dismayed if you feel like some of your foundations are getting pulled out from under you. Try to keep an open mind.

This is what I love best about verse by verse exegesis. (first given in Jan. 2011) Sooner or later, every topic will come up. Paul told the Ephesian elders that in the 2 years he had spent with them "I did not fail to declare unto you the full counsel of God".

That's incredibly important to me. I don't think people should go to a church for years and never learn anything. If we keep at this verse by verse exposition, it may not be in 2 years, but we will touch on the full counsel of God. I'm committed to that. It's become a lot more important to me since we started this Sunday evening thing a year and a half ago.

This is a chunk. If God graciously helps us to get this, that's a chunk of meat. We don't want you to choke, so keep chewing.

Jacob I loved, Esau I hated.

Malachi!

The word means messenger. Indeed he will be God's final messenger to His people until John the Baptist explodes onto the scene 400 years later to introduce their Messiah.

vss. 1 - 3a The oracle (or burden) of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. 2 "I have loved you," says the Lord. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the Lord. "Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated.

The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. Burden is bad news. This is heavy. This is not fluffy happiness.

The tone is heartbreaking. We've all seen it - when one party in a relationship is still tender - but the other party's heart has departed and can only barely tolerate the first with a tone of insolence. Have you

been there? Had a lover who can barely tolerate a conversation and just wants to get away from you. Maybe a teenager?

The parallel here is in the book of Hosea ch, 1-3. God tells Hosea to marry a harlot. Israel, and indeed all of us too, was a harlot when God chose her in the first place. There were no other better choices. When God purposed to redeem and love men, he only had whores to choose from.

So Gomer bears Hosea's children but returns to her harlotry. Chapter 3 of Hosea is short and may be helpful to understand the situation we have before us. Note the distance and the '*many days*'

Hosea 3 1 Then the Lord said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." 2 So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley. 3 And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man--so, too, will I be toward you." 4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. 5 Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.

God's relationship with His people at this juncture, 400 years before the Messiah, is distant and strained. Just like Hosea's was in chapter 3. He has redeemed his harlot for the second time (back in the land from captivity), she will cease the whoredom, but relationally there is a separation. The marriage is no longer consummated.

Israel came back from captivity cured of idol worship, but their heart for God was stone cold.

"I have loved you" says the Lord.

Here is the broken hearted lover in a one sided relationship. Tenderly and for the gazillionth time He says; "*I have loved you.*"

But the insolent retort comes back; "*How have you loved us?*"

Israel had been decimated. From a sovereign world power under David and Solomon - to a vassal state ruled by governors in a far off land. How have you loved us - you call that love??

God's answer is amazing! Don't tell me men wrote this book. Men could never invent a God like this.

Is not Esau, Jacob's brother? declares the Lord.

It's a rhetorical question. they all know the story of Jacob and Esau.

"Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated."

That is an astonishing statement.

Now the commentators do all kinds of tap dances around these verses. Even MacArthur who I perhaps love the best, says this is talking about national Israel and national Edom, not the individuals.

But Paul tells us in Romans 9, clear as a bell, when these 2 babies were in their mother's womb, God loved Jacob and hated Esau. What're you going to do with that! I brought scissors to hand out for anybody that wants to cut that verse out of their Bibles.

Is not Esau Jacob's brother? Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated.

The first thing you're going to do is say, IF that's true, and there's no other way to understand what is going on here, GOD is un-just. God's unjust!

That's what you *should* say. God HAS a problem here with His justice. You're absolutely right! Here's His problem; If your eyes are too pure to look on evil, God, you are unjust to love Jacob!

We've got this all backwards. There is NO injustice with God to throw us ALL in hell. We are rebels. We are His enemies. We are at war with God and He is righteous to hate His enemies. Where the justice question arises is How then can you arbitrarily choose to love Jacob! That's His problem, and it will cost Him his only son.

Do you begin to see the gravity of what God is saying in this opening section? Those 4 words cost God everything. ***I have loved you.*** The depth of the cost of God purposing before time and eternity that He would Glorify Himself by showing love to men, to me is incalculable. The only way to satisfy His justice and righteousness, and still love me, was to send Jesus to the cross.

So, if God is going to pay the price to purchase enemies and make them friends, why not Esau. It wouldn't cost any more right. Why not Esau, Why Jacob?
We struggle with that don't we.

Paul understands that struggle. His was even more bitter than ours. Paul was a patriot of Israel. He loved his countrymen deeply. Yet he could see that only a very small remnant of his beloved nation was believing. A tiny remnant.

Paul is struggling with these questions and he wants to help us understand why God doesn't just choose everybody. Paul's heart was broken that Israel wasn't swept into the kingdom wholesale, that just a miniscule few were believing. Why?

Romans 9 is Paul's effort to explain the mystery of God's selection process. Look briefly with me if you will at Romans 9:1-16 NKJ

In Romans 9, Paul is answering the question, he knows will be posed. You've just outlined the most magnificent promises in all of the Bible in Romans 8, they're breathtaking, but, what about Israel. God made them some promises too. Does He waver on His promises. Can He be trusted, in view of the fact that Israel is largely, set aside.

Paul is going to give 2 examples of how God chooses who He chooses.

1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect.

There's Paul's straw man. Someone's going to say, the Word has failed. Israel's out. They had incredible privilege, that Paul notes in vss. 4 and 5.

For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham;

Stop right there. Paul is going to argue this 2 different ways, and that verse is the reverse outline. First; *nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham;*

We get that. Abraham was visiting other tents, making this great name thing happen, without God. Ishmael was 13 years old!

But the second part is harder, right. OK, now we've got Jacob, his name is changed to Israel, and his descendents are the pure line, right? We've gotten past Abraham acting in the flesh, Israel's seed is the chosen line. Right?

No. Second part of Paul's argument. *For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,*

For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." 8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the

seed. 9 For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."

In this first argument, Paul contends that God is saying, "I get to choose. Not Abraham. Abraham's got fleshy seed and he's got miracle seed. I get to pick. I choose Isaac, by the miraculous vehicle of Sarah.

And then He says, not only do I get to choose the seed of promise, Isaac, but within the constraint of the chosen seed, I still get to choose.

Jacob and Esau in the same womb, no human fleshy action in the process, two babies in the same womb, I choose Jacob.

10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac 11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), 12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." 13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated." 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." 16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Take a look there beginning in vs 11

(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),

Notice there what is happening. God purposes to elect Jacob and not Esau. This word purpose is what is determined in the mind of God. God purposed. He purposed to love Jacob. Note that God's purpose had nothing to do with works past present or future of Jacob "*nor having done any good or evil*". He's going to say it twice. *Not of works, but of Him who calls.*

This is pretty clear. We may not like it, but Paul is trying to help us.

Before Jacob or Esau were born, God elected Jacob for glory and sentenced Esau to destruction. It didn't have anything to do with free will. God didn't look into the future and see that Jacob was a nice person and Esau was a bad person, and base His decision on that.

In fact when I read the story, Esau seems like the classier guy sometimes. Jacob is a swindler and a liar. He gets the blessing by deceit. And years later, Esau forgives him and welcomes him back into the land.

Not of works, but of Him who calls. He didn't look into the future and see that Jacob had faith and Esau didn't. *Not of works, but of Him who calls.* So what gives here. This is very difficult for us.

*12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." 13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated." **14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?***

That's the bottom line then isn't it, and Paul knows that's where our poor human brains will take us. Most folks bail out way before here. I congratulate you for hanging in with me this far.

If I had a nickel for every time I've heard someone say "Your God maybe, but my god would never do that, or act like that," or "I could never worship a god who can't allow homosexuals in heaven," and on and on it goes. We would be shocked and dismayed to find out the evangelical church in America doesn't really like the God of the Bible very much.

Romans 9:20a says; *On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God?*

We don't get to ask those questions. Not now. We approach the God of the Bible, just as He is presented, in Glory our brains aren't wired to understand, humbly and in awe.

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?

*Certainly not! mē genoito **never** let it be*

Paul uses the strongest possible negative. *theo me goinoto* God NOT allow happen. God forbid. To question God's righteousness or justice is never the right solution. We do not sit in judgement on God. That is frightening.

Paul then solves the problem in a way that seems very bizarre in verse 15.

For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

You read that about 4 times, and you say to yourself, Paul, I thought you were trying to help me. That just re-states the problem.

If you go and read Exodus 32 - 33 and 34 very carefully where this quote comes from, I believe you may learn something about God that is integral with what we have here. I hope that I don't lose you. I am barely catching the jist of this myself. It's complicated. Paul goes here because the answer is here. Turn there in your Bibles. Exodus 32

This is the story of Moses going up the mountain to get the law of God for the people. He delays and the people make the golden calf - Aaron loses control.

God's anger burns and He says he'll consume this people and make a nation from Moses. We have this interplay between God and Moses. Israel is like a hot potatoe that's getting tossed back and forth.

God tells Moses '*your* people who *you* brought etc.' and Moses says they're not mine their yours. God says I'm not going with them, I'll send an angel lest I consume them. Moses pleads with God to take back his people and lead them in their midst. Moses is asking for a blanket pardon, and he doesn't get it. God says *I will punish who I will punish*.

See it in 32:34 The construction seems to be very similar to the other quote about mercy and compassion.

God relents and says

*33:11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle. 12 Then Moses said to the Lord, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' 13 Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people." 14 And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." 15 Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. 16 For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? **So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.**"*

I need to camp right there for just a moment. Is this not a picture of God's church. Taken out of the kingdom of Satan, the authority to reign of Satan and transferred, out of this world, so to speak, into the Kingdom of God.

Beloved, we are a people unique in all the world. Separated from this world and its ways, its loves. Moses realizes that. We're no different from the rest of the world unless we possess God, and He possesses us.

Are we separate ***from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.***"

And if we aren't, we'd better check our spiritual pulse and ask why! OK, back to Moses having it out with God, All Gracious, and All Mighty.

17 So the Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name." 18 And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." 19 Then He

said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." 20 But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." 21 And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. 22 So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. 23 Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen." 34:1 And the Lord said to Moses, "Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. 2 So be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain. 3 And no man shall come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain." 4 So he cut two tablets of stone like the first ones. Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. 5 Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. 6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, (I Am that I Am,) merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." 8 So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.

As I've thought about what's happening in these chapters of Exodus over many weeks, here is what I think is happening. Notice the similar hebrew construction of all of these phrases.

God's name is I am that I am. The God who is, is the God who says I will.

Notice what happens when Satan says he will usurp the throne of God. What does he say. I will. I will. I will. I will. No, no, no, that's what God says. And God throws Him out of heaven.

Even James touches on the underlying idea. James 4:13 - 16 *13Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." 16But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.*

The God who is the source of all things is the one who says, I will. Not satan. Not you.

When Moses asked God to show him His glory, this is what God tells him.

I will punish who I will punish
I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious
I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion
I am that I am.

I have come to believe that God's election, God's choice, is inextricably linked to His glory. He chose to love Jacob for His glory. He chose to reject Esau for His glory. We don't get to question why. It's His God-ness to do that.

That long introduction brings us full circle back to Malachi 1.

"I have loved you" says the Lord.

"How have you loved us?"

"Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the Lord. "Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated. I have loved you that I have loved you. It just IS, by the purpose of God, for the Glory of God.

When we hear God say this, we need to have the same reaction as Moses did. Ex. 34:8 ***So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.***

Since God has begun to reveal these truths of His elective choice, verses are jumping off the pages at me. I'm always saying, "I never saw that before!"

Thurs. nite small group. 1 thess 5:24 *Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.* That's election. That's the perseverance of the saints. We skipped right over it. God's whole plan of salvation is in that verse. *Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass*

He calls you out of this world into His world. He finishes the work. Tell me what part of that I did. All of the Glory goes to God who calls and God who finishes.

OK, I'm going to bring us down out of heaven and back onto terra firma;

Revelation 22:17 says; *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

God gives us glimpses into His glory. he elects, He calls, He chooses - it's His Glory to do that--

We do not. We operate under Revelation 22:17

Come!

Come!

Come, who-so-ever will.....may come and drink.

A woman with tattoos of pentagrams brings her baby to the pre-school. Why would we be surprised if she is one of God's elect.?? There are mormons right here in our community.....elect.....waiting for us to say, come.

If God sends you to an Islamic country - God has people - elect people waiting for you to share His message. You'll probably get beheaded. But not before God calls His elect out of that sad tangled mess.

We used to get spanked when we had the Sears store for "pre-qualifying" people. Why bother filling out a credit app for that guy. He'd never get a credit card. Pre-qualifying. And we do that, don't we. Why bother sharing the gospel with that guy. He's the last guy who would ever respond.

And yet, the truths we've looked at about election completely blow that up. You have no idea in your wildest dreams who God has chosen before the foundations of the world. None!

Whosoever will, may come. Beloved, people are waiting for that call. People you would never expect in your wildest dreams, are waiting for you and me to go and deliver that call. Go tell everyone! Some will come.

Jesus died in order to remove your sins, to lift you out of this kingdom of Satan and transfer you into the Kingdom of God. He died so that His righteousness could be transferred, intact, to you. Your sins are transferred, all of them, to Him.

Who-so-ever will, may come. We go with that message. Some, by God's grace, will receive it. God has His elect, who are waiting to hear, and will come.

As the world gets more and more hostile, the truth that God has an elect remnant waiting to respond, fields ripe for harvest, becomes more and more precious.

The situation I've just described was exactly what Paul was experiencing in Corinth. The jews were resisting and blaspheming. And Paul shakes out his garments and says, your blood be on your own heads. I'm going to the gentiles.

Pauls been down this road before. The jews will cause a big fracas. Beatings and scourgings are the usual. Paul's had about enough. He's very likely considering moving on. He's been left for dead after being flogged one to many times. New territory is looking pretty good right

about now.

Let me read you just a bit of the account from Acts 18 in the NASB;
We'll pick it up in vs. 7;

*7Then he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue. 8Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. 9And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; 10for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, **for I have many people in this city.**" 11And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.*

Quiz. Why does God tell Paul to tough it out and stay in Corinth amongst the escalating resistance, blasphemy, jealousy and hatred of his own countrymen? ***for I have many people in this city***

Beloved, we are on the threshold of uncharted territory. All of a sudden our society is barely tolerating us even keeping our beliefs quietly to ourselves inside our 4 walls.

How are we going to approach the resistance that I believe is coming fast?

Do we tar the ark and pull the door closed and tar it shut, and wait? That's sort of the defensive approach. Or do we go on the offensive and preach the clear inerrant Word of God to a culture that's going to respond badly?

It could get very costly. Even Paul was thinking, maybe it's time to bail. I want you to have this truth in your tool kit. No matter how belligerent the resistance becomes, no matter what it begins to cost, God says; ***I have many people in this city***

Many are called. Few are chosen. But we can rejoice that no matter how ugly it gets, those chosen few are waiting, waiting to hear the call.

Jesus is calling. He has his few. We need to be obedient and tell them.
Come. Come to the feast.