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## **“CHOOSE LOVE”**

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**Saturday, December 27, 2025 • Pastor David Kramer**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- » **I have reached a stage in my life where I am aspiring to a couple of goals.**
  - \* **FIRST....I want to ENJOY MY LIFE.**
  - \* **When you have a BRUSH WITH DEATH...**
  - \* **My cancer journey....**
  - \* **You realize that LIFE IS GIFT.**
  - \* **Visited a new cemetery on THURSDAY....I look at the tombstones...and wonder about the people.**
- » **I want to make the most of my life...**
  - \* **I want to LIVE IT TO THE FULLEST.**
  - \* **I want to take time to ENJOY my life.**
  - \* **I don't want to JUST EXIST....right?**
  - \* **BE THE TYPE OF PERSON....you enjoy meeting...**
  - \* **Generous...happy...positive...loving**
- » **While I have always been a PEACEMAKER....**
  - \* **People say I CAN BE STUBBORN....**
  - \* **I'm not interested in CONFLICT...STRIFE...FUSSING....FIGHTING.**

- \* I'm not saying I don't still ENGAGE IN IT....from time to time.
- \* I heard JOYCE MEYERS say one time: **YOU CAN GIVE UP THE RIGHT TO BE....RIGHT....RIGHT?**
- \* Some things are not worth fighting about.
- \* Like TV SHOWS....and taking OUT THE GARBAGE....

» **I'm learning that I AM IN CHARGE OF ME.**

- \* I am in charge of how I talk....how I respond to people...
- \* My attitude....my eye-rolling....my facial expressions...

» **Our culture seems to be embracing the idea....**

- \* That everything has to GO MY WAY....
- \* In order for me TO BE HAPPY.

» **Well...let me share some news with you:**

- \* Things aren't always gonna go your way.
- \* In fact...things most likely **WON'T GO YOUR WAY.**

» **How many are waiting for OTHER PEOPLE TO GET THEIR ACT TOGETHER...**

- \* So you can **BE THE PERSON YOU WERE MEANT TO BE?**
- \* Y'all...you know that's true...
- \* We tell ourselves: **"I could be a better person....IF....**
- \* I had a better boss....my spouse would treat me right...

- \* **And so on...**
- » **Let me tell you again: I AM IN CHARGE OF ME.**
  - \* **If I don't like what I see in my life...**
  - \* **I'm the only one that can change it.**
  - \* **The Bible tells us to EXAMINE OURSELVES...**
  - \* **I certainly don't want ANYONE ELSE telling me...right?**
- » **It's the holiday season....and people are focused on BEING HAPPY....right?**
  - \* **There's parties....decorations....gifts....dinners...**
  - \* **It's a time to be happy.**
- » **Why are we focusing on being happy during this season?**
  - \* **Because we CRAVE HAPPINESS.**
  - \* **We CRAVE ACCEPTANCE...**
  - \* **And finally we CRAVE BEING LOVED....unconditionally.**
- » **We are waiting for someone to LOVE US...the way we think we should be loved.**
  - \* **But let me turn that statement around:**
  - \* **Are you loving people....the way THEY DESERVE TO BE LOVED?**
  - \* **Or is your love CONDITIONAL?**

» **We all know about CONDITIONAL LOVE...right?**

- \* **We want people to PROVE THEY LOVE US...**
- \* **By the way they treat us...acknowledge us....**
- \* **Or...accept us.**
- \* **Even when we are NOT THE BEST VERSION of ourselves.**

» **We joke around here about the CHURCH VERSION of ourselves...right?**

- \* **My wife sometimes says: “I want to talk to person you are when your at church.”**
- \* **“You know...the nice version...the polite version....the not-yelling version...”**
- \* **To which I respond: “Well, if you would act like the church version of you....**
- \* **the “Hey! How are you? Laughing and smiling..”**
- \* **Then I could be the church version of me.**

» **Have you ever had that conversation with your spouse...DON'T RAISE YOUR HAND (LOL!).**

» **Why am I saying all of this? Here comes my sermon title:**

- \* **“CHOOSE LOVE.”**
- \* **Love is a choice.**
- \* **Too often we think LOVE IS A FEELING...and love does include feelings...but LOVE IS A CHOICE.**

- \* **Love is a DECISION that I make.**
- » **Now...I could spend a couple of hours talking about all the things the Bible says about love.**
  - \* **But I'm not sure you would still love me if I did that this morning....so...**
  - \* **Let me summarize it for you.**
- » **Do you know that you and I are not the first to inquire about LOVE?**
  - \* **When Jesus was walking this earth...some 2,000 years ago...**
  - \* **The Jewish Leaders asked Him to summarize His message to them.**
  - \* **How many can admit that the BIBLE SEEMS OVERWHELMING AT TIMES?**
  - \* **Do this...don't do that...think this...don't think that...and so on!**
- » **The Jews were asking: "Jesus...can you tell us WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT?"**
  - \* **I do that to my wife sometimes....she'll be giving me a long story...**
  - \* **With details that are way too much for me to absorb...**
  - \* **And I'll say: "What is it you want me to do?"**
  - \* **And she says: I WANT TO TALK WITH THE CHURCH VERSION OF YOU....right!**

» **In Matthew 22:36-40 Jesus gives us a great summary:**

**36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”**

**37 Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”**

**38 This is the first and great commandment.**

**39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’**

**40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”**

» **Jesus tells us to LOVE GOD.**

- \* Can we admit...that we think people might NOT LOVE US....
- \* If they knew everything about us?
- \* All they know is the CHURCH VERSION of us right?
- \* The put-together...polite...sweet version of us.

» **But...God knows everything about us...**

- \* And **HE STILL CHOOSES TO LOVE US.**
- \* **You have never HID ANYTHING FROM GOD.**
- \* And yet **HE STILL LOVES YOU.**
- \* Why? Because **HE CHOOSES TO LOVE YOU.**
- \* **He loves us UNCONDITIONALLY!**

» **Most of us grew up with a LOVING GRANDMOTHER...right?**

- \* **It wasn't hard to love Grandma...why?**
- \* **Because you could do no wrong in her sight.**
- \* **She loved you UNCONDITIONALLY.**
- \* **She loved you WITH ALL YOUR FAULTS.**
- \* **She LOOKED FOR THE GOOD IN YOU...when others only saw bad.**

» **God chooses to love us. And, just an important...He made us in HIS IMAGE.**

- \* **Ever get mad at yourself...BECAUSE YOU CRAVE LOVE?**
- \* **You crave for someone to ACCEPT YOU....just as you are?**
- \* **WE DON'T LIKE TO FEEL VULNERABLE.**
- \* **Why do we want to be loved?**
- \* **Because at the root of our existence...in the very CORE OF OUR BEING...**
- \* **Our spirit seeks love...because we are like our Father...and HE IS LOVE.**

» **How can I love you UNCONDITIONALLY?**

- \* **Because God FIRST LOVED ME....unconditionally.**
- \* **What does UNCONDITIONAL mean?**
- \* **It means WITHOUT CONDITIONS.**

- \* **In other words: I CHOOSE TO LOVE YOU...regardless of what you do or how you act.**
- » **That's what Jesus did when He forgave the very people WHO WERE CRUCIFYING HIM....**
  - \* **How could He do that? Because He had made up His mind to love.**
  - \* **He knew they didn't fully understand what they were doing.**
- » **So...how does this type of love....relate to ME TODAY?**
  - \* **My sermon title is: CHOOSE LOVE.**
  - \* **And I want to add: ALL THE TIME.**
- » **Can we admit that WE CAN CONTROL OURSELVES...all the time?**
  - \* **We have the power to do that.**
  - \* **The Apostle Paul tells us in ROMANS 6:1-7,12-14,**
    - 1 "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"**
    - 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?**
    - 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?**
    - 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.**

- 5 ***For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,***
- 6 ***knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.***
- 7 ***For he who has died has been freed from sin.***
- 8 ***Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,***
- 9 ***knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.***
- 10 ***For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.***
- 11 ***Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.***
- 12 ***Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.***
- 13 ***And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.***
- 14 ***For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”***

» Does that mean that I will never have to DEAL WITH SIN ANYMORE?

\* No...it does not mean that.

- \* **The Apostle Paul goes on to say that HE HAS TO CRUCIFY HIS FLESH....everyday!**
- \* **You still have to FIGHT YOUR FLESH.**
- » **What Paul is saying is YOU NOW HAVE THE POWER...TO OVERCOME SIN IN OUR FLESH.**
  - \* **Before you accepted Jesus...YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE POWER TO OVER COME SIN.**
  - \* **I'm not saying you were a MURDERER...**
  - \* **I'm just saying that you were POWERLESS against your sinful nature.**
- » **But now that you are a believer....YOU HAVE THE POWER.**
  - \* **How many like to be in control?**
  - \* **Well...I have great news for our today...**
  - \* **You are in FULL CONTROL TODAY!**
  - \* **You are the boss...OF YOU!**
- » **You CAN CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS....**
  - \* **Your actions....**
  - \* **Your facial features....**
  - \* **Your tongue....**
  - \* **Your smart mouth....**
  - \* **Your temper....**

- \* **Your body...**
- » **Because you accepted Jesus as your Savior....**
  - \* **You have control over yourself...**
  - » **Let me encourage you....to CHOOSE LOVE.**
    - \* **Choose to SHOW LOVE to everyone....all the time.**
    - \* **I encourage you to BE THE PERSON...your dog thinks you are.**
    - \* **Be the person you ENJOY MEETING...or being with.**
  - » **I'm not saying PRETEND....I'm saying....**
    - \* **Keep your heart right...**
    - \* **By forgiving those who trespass against you...**
    - \* **And DO IT FAST....FORGIVE FAST!**
  - » **CHOOSE LOVE!**