



THE 3 C'S OF EASTER

"The Choice"

Mark 14:32-42; Luke 9:51-62

March 17, 2013

The Call *Genesis 2-3; John 12:27-28a*

The Conversation *Matthew 16:21-23; 17:22-23, 20:17-19, 26:2,12,31-32; Mark 8:31-33, 10:45; Luke 2:29-35, 9:51-55; John 16:16-22*

The Challenge *Matthew 4:1-1; Luke 4:1-13*

The Choice

The Conquest – The Champion

Our Call

Genesis 2-3; Mathew 10:24-42; 16:24-28; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9:57-62, 21:12-19

Our Conversation

World will hate you and persecute you

Our Challenge

Our Choice

Our Conquest *John 15-17*

- ✓ Abide in Him & Know Him
- ✓ Love Him & Love Others (Unity)
- ✓ Follow Him & Obey Him
- ✓ Rely & Depend on Him (Holy Spirit).

✓ Ask Him/Call (Pray) to Him

✓ Glorify Him

✓ Trust Him

✓ Serve Him

Our Response:

1. Has there ever been that moment where you made the clear and conscious CHOICE to ask Christ in your heart? Would you do that today? It is as simple as **ABC!** **Admit** to God you are a sinner, **Ask** for His forgiveness, **Believe** Jesus is God's Son, **Confess** Him as Savior & **Commit** Your Life to Him as Lord. (the Boss of your life)
2. Have you asked Christ into your heart but never made it public. Have you not been baptized? You can come & make that decision today public today. This is a CHALLENGE for some of us, but it is His clear CALL.
3. Are you taking your CALL seriously and being a Christ Follower: Denying Yourself; Taking up your Cross Daily; and Following Him?
4. Are you a part of a church family? If not, you need one! Is the Lord calling you to Petal FBC today? Why wait any longer? Step over the line and join us in reaching this community with the gospel of Jesus Christ! May it be the CONQUEST in your life as you are obedient to Him!!
5. Believer, would you spend time this week as we head towards the remembering of the Cross, the Lord's Supper, Palm Sunday and then towards Easter of the tremendous sacrifice made for you and for me. May we thank Him, praise Him and may it make a difference in our lives this week.
6. Would you make the clear CHOICE to reach out, even though the CHALLENGE is there? Contact that friend this week to invite them to come to Easter Sunday!
7. May we CONQUER in Jesus' name these next few weeks for the Kingdom of God in our own personal lives and also in the CALLING to Share the Easter Story!

THE 3 C's OF EASTER

“The Choice”

Mark 14:32-42 & Luke 9:51-62

March 17, 2013 AM Service

ILLUS: The Passion Video Clip of the Garden 4:40 – 9:22

We begin this series of the 3 C's of Easter, the Choice, The Cross, and the Crown. And this morning we have just witnessed the story of the first C, and it is perhaps the most important in some aspects for it was here that the final yielding and surrendering to the Will of the Heavenly Father took place, it was here that Jesus chose you and me, versus His own will and desire. So, let's take a look at Jesus and the incredible choice that He made that a profound and life changing impact on us and then then we will take a look at our lives and how we should answer each of these in light of the Garden, the Cross, and Easter.

The Call [Genesis 2-3](#); [John 12:27-28a](#)

“But why a Garden? Human history began in a Garden ([Gen 2:7-25](#)) and so did human sin ([Genesis 3](#)). For the redeemed, the whole story will climax in a "garden city" where there will be no sin ([Rev 21:1-22:7](#)). But between the Garden where man failed and the Garden where God reigns is Gethsemane, the Garden where Jesus accepted the cup from the Father's hand. The first Adam rebelled in the Garden of Eden and brought sin and death into the world, but the Last Adam ([1 Cor 15:45](#)) submitted in the Garden of Gethsemane and brought life and salvation for all who will believe.” Weirsbe

So we see where Jesus clearly states and understood what His purpose was in coming to this earth, to die! This ties in so beautifully to where we have been these last several weeks on our What on Earth Am I Here For? Journey – Jesus knew why He was here on earth! There were other reasons for sure, but the main and most important was to die for the sins of the world. He was willing to live up to His call, that was the single most important thing to fulfill His purpose here on this earth. – [John 12:27-28a](#)

The Conversation [Matthew 16:21-23](#); [17:22-23](#), [20:17-19](#), [26:2,12,31-32](#); [Mark 8:31-33](#), [10:45](#); [Luke 2:29-35](#), [9:51-56](#); [John 16:16-22](#)

He told the His disciples no less than 10 different times that He was headed to the cross, that He was going to die and rise again three days later, He had prepared them. It was a clear decision, one that He had decided that He would do in obedience to the Father. He made that final call in the Garden of Eden, well, maybe in [Luke 9:51](#), or no when He came to earth as a baby, no perhaps when the prophecies of Isaiah were written, or maybe when David wrote his Psalm, or through the sacrificial system set up in Exodus and Leviticus as we have been reading this last week that point to Him, or maybe in Genesis in the Garden. No it really wasn't any of those places, Turn to [Revelation 13:8](#) & let's read
Folks, God had you and I on His mind before the beginning of the World!!

The Challenge Reference back to the Temptation in the Wilderness [Matthew 4:1-11](#) (; [Luke 4:1-13](#) – **Verse 13**) (More opportune time) Satan has been waiting for the right time and here it is, the weight of the decision was crushing and the temptation was surely before Jesus. But let it be clear that Jesus was not wrestling with God's will or resisting God's will. He was yielding Himself to God's will. As perfect Man, He felt the awful burden of sin, and His holy soul was repelled by it. Yet as the Son of God, He knew that this was His mission in the world. The mystery of His humanity and deity is seen vividly in this scene. Weirsbe
Dr. Luke is the only Gospel writer who mentions "sweat... like great drops of blood." His use of the word *like* may suggest that the sweat merely fell to the ground like dots of blood. But there is a rare physical phenomenon known as *hematidrosis*, in which, under great emotional stress, the tiny blood vessels rupture in the sweat glands and produce a mixture of blood and sweat. The first Adam sinned in a Garden and was condemned to living by the sweat of his brow. Jesus, the Last Adam, obeyed the Father in a Garden and conquered Adam's sin

The Choice

There was clearly a choice here, Jesus could have chosen another path, gone a different direction, listened to the temptation of the devil. So He makes the choice to go the Father, to cry out to Him, to commune with Him so as to help Him to make that right choice. And it is here that He goes and prays and takes His closest earthly friends to pray with Him. and spends that intimate time with the Father and where the battle is ultimately

won! Satan knew that if Jesus chose the right thing that he was doomed! It was to take my awful sin and the sin of the whole world to the cross and be separated from the Father.

It was here that He clearly made the decision to stay the course, and go to the cross. He paid my debt on the cross as we will talk about next week, but clearly the decision and decisive victory was won here in the Garden. Had Jesus chose to ignore the Father's Call and His life and it certainly was His choice, we would have been doomed! And notice the choice and we will it even more clearly next week when Satan offers Jesus a choice that was the same during the Temptation in the wilderness through the voice of the Pharisees – come down and then we will believe you. Just as Jesus didn't, we don't just conquer Satan one time and then it's over, it is an everyday choice that we must make to choose to follow Christ and reject Satan and his appeals to our flesh!

The Conquest – The Champion

He smashed the enemy – crushed him!! An angel comes to minister to Jesus right there in the garden. Jesus was the Champion of all Champions! Song: He's the all-time, undisputed, undefeated Champion of Love! Now the enemy's roll switches to that of destroyer and swiftly changes his plans. We will find him next week at the foot of the cross and even at the grave, but we will see every step of the way, Jesus was the Champion – through the illegal trial that was to follow by the Jewish leaders to the trial with Pontus Pilate to even before King Herod, He remains the Champion though not in the world's eyes, and not even His followers at the time because they didn't understand but in the eyes of the Father and of course in our eyes He was and still is the Champion!!

Our Call from Christ [Matt. 10:24-42](#); [16:24-28](#); [Mark 8:34-38](#), [21:12-19](#)

To have a relationship with Him – that's what He created us for – to be loved by Him and then for us to be like Him and follow Him!

To die – just as Jesus did – not for the world nor a physical death but to die to ourselves and die to the things of the world! [Galatians 2:20](#)

Deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow Him. That is the clear call that Jesus lays out for every believer who chooses to follow Him!

Folks, if we really take a long, hard look at this, most of us are falling woefully short! Can we just take a self-examination quickly, what are you

denying yourself of? How are you taking up your cross every day, and where you are following Him? What are you doing for the kingdom?

Our Conversation – Jesus and Us; Luke 9:57-62

The disciples and Jesus have a conversation starting in Luke 9:46 about greatness and His call to go and die and then one of them hears the call and says I will follow you wherever you go – answering the call of Christ and so Christ says follow me and the conversation turns into a lot of excuses of not now, maybe later, let me do this first, etc. He reiterates the call to follow must happen NOW and not tomorrow!

That same conversation is happening today and the question is how will the rest of the conversation go today?... What excuses will we make. I'm too young, too old, don't have enough time, it's not the right time, when I do this or get here, or accomplish this, when it's easier, when I understand more, and we make lots of lists and reasons of why we can't. Instead our conversation should be a simple yes Lord, yes.

Our Challenge

Jesus left eight of His disciples somewhere in the Garden and took Peter, James, and John with Him to a private place to pray. This is the third time He has shared a special occasion with these three men. The first was when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead, and the second was when He was transfigured before them.

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, the British expositor, has pointed out that each of these occasions had something to do with death. In Jairus' house, Jesus proved Himself to be victorious over death; and on the Mount of Transfiguration, He was glorified through death. (He and Moses and Elijah were talking about His "exodus" in Jerusalem). Here in the Garden, Jesus was surrendered to death. Since James was the first of the apostles to die, John the last to die, and Peter experienced great persecution and eventually was crucified, these three lessons were very practical for their own lives. There were great tests, and Jesus was urging them to watch and pray, He desired them to be with him and pray so that they would stay strong. They seemed to see no need. How wrong they were!

Today, we face the same challenges don't we? Is all that really necessary? Is prayer really that important? Does it change anything? Is there any need to pray? And the real answer and challenge is YES! We must watch

and pray, be on guard and be in prayer all the time, not just to start the day or even end the day, but all throughout the day. Remember, the challenge is ever before us – will we follow our ways, our flesh, our desires, or will we follow Christ the Lord? It is a daily challenge – again why Jesus tells them it is a daily thing and if we try and do it in our own strength we will never do it, might once or twice but never completely!

Oh Church we must pray as a body too. We must pray for Christ to move in us individually, in our homes and families, in our schools, workplaces, communities, and here in our Church. That we would rise up to the challenge to pray so that we can live our call and live up to the onslaught of the enemy who would seek to discourage us, divide us, dissuade us from following, distract us, and even destroy us. He was trying in the Garden of Eden and he was still trying in the Garden of Gethsemane and he is still trying today... Which leads us to our choice today...

Our Choice

To Follow Christ and allow Him to be Savior and Lord of our Life

To then be disciple of Christ (not just a believer – but a disciple!)

Will we desire the will of God more than our own?! Make no mistake that when we more sincerely seek to do God's will, the more severely Satan will attempt to lure us from it, just as He did Christ. And like our Lord, our response should be prayerful, single minded determination to draw near to our Heavenly Father!

Oh church, may He awaken us from our slumber and sleep and jolt us awake this morning. We stand on the edge of another huge moment where life and death hang in the balance! Will we invite someone to join us for Easter Sunday so they could be confronted with the choice to follow Christ? Will you make that invitation?

Our Conquest [John 15-17](#)

So what is our conquest, what will make us a Champion? How can we make live up to our call, rise up to our challenge, and make the right choice(s)? Jesus left His disciples and us some incredibly important words, His last teachings if you will that have great encouragement and impact for us today. Here they are...

✓ **Abide in Him & Know Him** – This is the key – it must start here and it is the only way that we can live out the rest.

- ✓ **Love Him & Love Others (Unity)** We love because He first loved us and because of that love we are then called to love others.
- ✓ **Follow Him & Obey Him** There is our call – if we love Him we will follow and obey Him – not out duty but out of devotion!
- ✓ **Rely & Depend on Him** This life is impossible to live on our own, the Christian life is impossible to live, it is only as we rely and depend upon Him through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can live it!
- ✓ **Ask Him/Call (Pray) to Him** Our Challenge is that we must pray – if Jesus the Son of God saw the need, then how much more should we!
- ✓ **Glorify Him** – that what Jesus said He had come to do and that He had done and that was to glorify the Father – that His life brought honor, recognition, praise to His Father and so should we!
- ✓ **Trust Him** We must especially in the tough times and even the good times. Trust that His Word and His promises trust that He will never us nor forsake us, that He will provide for us and protect us and that He will guide us and work all things together for our good!
- ✓ **Serve Him** We have to put feet to action, we have to not just talk about it but we must actually do it! We serve Him by serving others.