

AN ELECTION SURPRISE

Scripture used: [2 Chronicles 7:14 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon officially launched our annual “Be Rich to Others” outreach during the pre-Christmas season (based on [1 Timothy 6:18](#)). We are called to serve, pray, love, and give. Today, after an intensively polarizing election, we turn to Scripture to be reminded that God speaks of “My People, who are called by my name.” We acknowledge that we have a “My People” problem in America. Just like the Nation of Israel was elected by God to do great things, we must remember that the church as a whole, as God’s people, have been “elected” (i.e. chosen) to be united in their witness of who God is and the grace, mercy, and love of God. The division of our nation is a civic problem. But when civic division overflows in the church and compromises our unity in Christ and our shared foundation as sinners who have been saved by grace, then we need to recognize that our priority needs to re-align with God.

KEY POINTS

- 1) A sense of being elected is omnipresent in Scripture. Being elected does not mean being separated between winners and losers. It means being chosen to become responsible for a special task. For God’s people, it means becoming the conduit of God’s blessing to the world, the display of His transformative power. In [Isaiah 49:6](#), we learn that God’s intention in choosing is to allow the world (the Gentiles in the context of the passage) to encounter the light of God’s love and presence. [Matthew 1:16](#) traces the lineage of the early elect through multiple generations all the way to Jesus. Jesus’ family and clan being elected literally paves the path to his ministry, his being raised from the dead, and our salvation.
- 2) Scripture reminds us ([John 20:21-22](#)) that no matter how we are feeling about the present or the future, we should not feel trapped by loss, fear, or uncertainty. Jesus gives us His peace in all circumstances. [Colossians 3:12](#) calls us to be clothed with love. The onus is on each one of us to do the work of depolarization, to demonstrate with our lives that we have a hope and a foundation that allows us to love those whom we disagree with, whether they are in our families, at our workplaces, or within our church community.
- 3) We must humble ourselves in the current climate, realizing that we don’t have the whole story, and that humility should lead us to listen to others with an open and learning heart. When he was the senior pastor at Roxbury Presbyterian Church, Pastor Hurmon oversaw a frank dialogue between Jewish citizens concerned that their elders were maltreated and neglected by their Haitian-American nurses and caregivers in assisted-living facilities. Meanwhile, the caregivers felt disrespected, overwhelmed, and taken for granted. The church facilitated a safe and open time for dialogue, and as they heard each other’s stories and developed understanding and empathy, a remarkable work of healing occurred which ended up resulting in concrete policy changes that made both communities stronger.
- 4) Don’t let cable TV define you. Don’t let symbols define you (our highest and deepest identity is not rooted in being a blue donkey or a red elephant). Remember that the Lamb of God is your ultimate symbol ([John 1:29](#)). Listen without judgment and embrace the peaceful and gentle Lamb of God as your guide.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Do you know that God has chosen or “elected” you for a specific plan and purpose for your life? Do you recognize that your “election” is also a part of the choosing of the entire community of those following Jesus to be a light in this world? How does being chosen affect how you think about your life?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [2 Chronicles 7:14](#). What do you think it looks like for God’s people to be faithful to God in this season? How do you determine whether you are being more faithful to a political ideology or to the teachings of Jesus? Do you believe that a church community can genuinely find common ground in their experience of God’s love, and still support different policy outcomes based on their different life experiences and perspectives?
- 3) **DO** - For this season, remember to pray at least 5 minutes per day: this week, we pray for the nation. Go to www.nbccbayarea.com/berich2020 for details on serving through making homeless hygiene kits and the partner organizations we will be supporting through our generosity in this season! Let’s come together to serve others and be a light for this world!