

# Make Your Calling and Election Sure

Roger Kendall—May 24, 2015

As we all know Pentecost is a feast of harvest and this looks forward to time when the saints of God will be resurrected and be given eternal life in the family of God. So, this truly is a milestone and incredible day for the Church. The saints can look forward to being with God the Father and Jesus Christ in the kingdom.

I want to bring out something regarding the resurrection and looking forward to that.

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, **that we should be called the children of God!** For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. **Beloved, now we are the children of God,** and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, **we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is**” (vs 1-2).

What John is saying that we’re going to be changed to spirit and changed to be in the Family of God and that we shall be like Jesus Christ is. This is a wonderful revelation.

Notice that it says, “**Beloved, now we are the children of God...**” That’s present tense, so, indeed, God knows the future from the present. John says that because he’s looking at the fact that we are now the children of God and have been begotten by the Holy Spirit

It’s like a baby in the womb. We are now a begotten member of the family, no yet born. God looks upon us as already being in His family. That’s something to think about. But what are the conditions to be called the children of God?

1. one has been called
2. you have to receive baptism and the Holy Spirit

Once one is begotten of the Holy Spirit we have the begetting of God’s Holy Spirit and we stand before God, justified before God through Christ in us and we live by grace and not law.

It’s very interesting to think about this and focus in on what it means to be a child of God. As we think about the resurrection of the firstfruits:

- What is required?
- Is this all there is, the fact that we’re now begotten of the Holy Spirit?
- Did not Paul say to ‘work out your own salvation with fear and trembling’?
- Don’t we know that God is looking for good works to be developed in us?

So, there are other things required beyond just having the Holy Spirit. That’s what I want to focus in on today.

When we pursue righteousness we’re building the character of God, the Holiness of God, within us, because we’re taking on His attributes, His character as we practice the commandments and do His will. {note sermon: *In Pursuit of Righteousness*}

There’s another aspect of righteousness that I want to cover today, the very nature of producing righteous fruits. That’s part of developing righteousness and ***make your calling and election sure!*** We now await the return of Jesus Christ from above, and as we develop the Holy Spirit within us, we develop the fruits of God’s Holy Spirit. These are the aspects of Godly love, the love of God.

God provides His Holy Spirit, and through the Holy Spirit we are to develop the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and we have a part in developing those fruits. It’s not done automatically. It’s a partnership! God gives us His Spirit and the power, but we have to work at developing these fruits in our lives.

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering [forbearance], kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” (vs 22-23).

What do these fruits describe? *The very nature of God! His character!* These fruits represent who and what God is. As we grow in conversion we become more like God, and therefore, if we’re being converted, then we will manifest the fruits of God’s Holy Spirit as the outer proof or evidence that we are the children of God. We can see how all of these things all hinge together.

As we grow in those fruits of the Holy Spirit we’re developing the very mind and character of Jesus Christ. As you put those into practice, as you live your life—what you say, what you do, how you conduct yourself among others—you basically are reflecting the very nature of Christ that’s in you.

When Jesus Christ returns, He is expecting to find the fruits of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. That’s His expectation. ***He’s expecting to find the living proof that we belong to Him!*** We have to have the evidence, the substance, that we truly are growing in the Holy Spirit, that we’re overcoming. That is manifested by the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Brethren, He literally wants to see Himself within us! He wants to see Himself reflected, in a

much smaller way, within our very nature and the character that we have. In the past, I've heard individuals say, 'I wonder if I'm going to be ready for the return of Jesus Christ?' In other words:

- Have I developed enough character?
- Have I developed enough righteousness?
- Am I going to be ready?
- Have I grown enough?
- Have I overcome enough?

Perhaps the anxiety or doubts about one being in the first resurrection or not may be a result of studying the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Matt. 25).

You know the story: The wise virgins brought adequate oil with them in a separate vessel to go along with their lamps. Whereas, the foolish virgins only just brought the little oil that was in their lamps and did not bring any reservoir of oil with them. So, the consequences were that they ran out of oil.

Let's get a view of what Christ has tried to teach us—the firstfruits and the very called of God—by this parable. This parable is not aimed at the world. This is for the true begotten children of God. In fact, we can say in one sense that the Bible was written for the Church. The Bible in its entirety was not written for the world, it was written for the people of God! God wants people to know His laws and to keep those laws in the letter, but *the spiritual intent is for God's people*.

Matthew 25:1: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. The ones who were foolish took their lamps, but they did not take oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels along with their lamps. Now, when the bridegroom was gone a long time, they all became drowsy and slept" (vs 1-5). This is the nature of, as we wait, becoming impatient and becoming drowsy.

Verse 6: "But in the middle of the night there was a cry: 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps 'Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out'" (vs 6-8). They were running out of fuel! When you run out of fuel, oil, you run out of light. They were concerned.

Verse 9: "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there not be enough for us and for you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'"

We know there is more to that. They were not being selfish. Why couldn't they share their oil? *Because one person cannot share the Holy Spirit*

*with another!* The oil represents the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has to be given to person directly from God; God is the Source! What the wise virgin said was "...No, lest there not be enough for us and for you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves." It's not to be bought, it's free of charge from God. They told them to *go seek the Source!*

Verse 10: "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut." The five went in and the five foolish ones did not. They weren't there. When they did come later:

Verse 11: "And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But He answered and said, 'Truly I say to you, **I do not know you**'" (vs 11-12). What was Christ looking for that He did not know them?

The warning, v 13: "Watch, Therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming." In other words, be prepared! We do not know the day or the hour; we have to be ready for Christ's return.

Very clearly, the foolish virgins were deficient in oil, but they were also deficient in something else.

- How do we produce fruits of the Holy Spirit if it's not through the Holy Spirit?
- If you are out of the Holy Spirit, are you going to be able to produce the fruits of the Holy Spirit? *Not very well; NO, you can't do that!*
- If you are low on the Holy Spirit, are you going to be producing a lot of the fruits of the Holy Spirit? *No!*

What I'm trying to connect here is that not only in the past we said that the oil represents the Holy Spirit of God, which it does, but what are the consequences: no oil, no producing of the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

What the consequences would be is that if Christ does not see the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and therefore, *He does not see Himself reflected in the very character of the foolish virgins* of that time.

Another rendition of this situation in a slightly different way, Luke 13:24: "**Strive with your whole being to enter in through the narrow gate**; for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, but shall not be able." They don't come with the right attitude, the right aspect of repentance, the right ideas about what they need to be doing.

This may apply both to the world, but also to those who are in the Church. We are to strive with all our being, to be in the first resurrection. We have our part to play.

Verse 25: “Once the Master of the house has risen up and has shut the door... [we saw that happen in Matt. 25] ...and you begin to stand outside the door and knock, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us’; then shall He answer *and* say to you, ‘I do not know you *or* where you are from.’” He’s adding another element. Why are you standing there? I don’t see why you’re striving to enter in.

Verse 26: “And you shall begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets.’” In other words, they had acquaintance, they have understanding, but what did they lack? *The lacked the fruits of the Holy Spirit!*

Verse 27: “And He shall say, ‘I tell you, I do not know you *or* where you are from. Depart from Me, all *you* workers of unrighteousness.’” They weren’t working righteousness.

Verse 28: “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you yourselves are cast out.” That is a foreboding; that is serious!

The five foolish virgins, we don’t know their fate per se, but it’s clear that they did not have the credentials, they did not have the Holy Spirit to come into the first resurrection. It may be that they will be in the second resurrection. That’s speculation on my part. Perhaps they may not enter in at all because they may be tares, false brethren.

The point here is that Christ is telling us that we have to be ready and be able to produce fruits in our lives.

Matt. 13—here we see the parable where the sower of the seed goes forth and that seed lands on different ground: rocky, thorny, along the trails, but some lands on good ground. I’m going to focus on the good ground.

Matthew 13:23: “But the one who was sown on good ground...” The seed is the Word of God. You could say that’s a calling, coming upon a person to respond. “...good ground...” represents the heart, ***a heart that’s repentant, submissive and yielded to God!*** That’s a special condition.

The other soils, the rocky soils, were not conditioned that way, so they did not receive the seed. When a seed falls into rich soil and you add water, what happens? *It germinates! It begins to grow!* Water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. You can see that the analogy here fits quite well.

“...this is **the one who hears the Word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces**—one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold *and* another thirtyfold” (v 23).

A seed enters into a person, it’s the fertile soil, and it produces fruit. It’s the natural extension of what God is doing in our lives.

***Christ and God the Father expects to find fruit in us***, and to see an increase in the Holy Spirit. He’s given us a small down payment of the Holy Spirit. That Holy Spirit is to grow and as it grows in us then more fruit is produced, because it comes from God through the Holy Spirit. Christ shows that if we are converted and connected to Him, we will produce abundant fruit. Where do we read that?

John 15 is very pertinent to what we’re talking about. It talks about being connected to the mind, to Jesus Christ.

John 15:1: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.” Clearly in analogy, God the Father and Christ are in the farming business. What are they farming for? *Trying to produce sons of God, the children of God!*

Verse 2: “He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit.” A dead branch you cut off and throw it into the fire. A dead branch could be a potential son of God, but they’re not bearing fruit. What happens? *They dry up and die, are cast away and no longer profitable!*

Verse 3: “You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you.” Through baptism we’ve already been cleanse and, in that sense, as Christ says:

Verse 4: “Dwell in Me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit unless* you are dwelling in Me.” Here we see the most crucial condition of all. The only way we can bear fruit of the Holy Spirit is to be connected to Jesus Christ in prayer and, study to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to be able to dwell in Him and He dwells in us.

You can see this mutual interaction because if Christ is dwelling in us through the Holy Spirit, when He comes and looks at those who are standing at the door, He’s going to see Himself in the person. This is what this is saying. Christ is dwelling within us ***IF*** we’re cultivating and growing in the fruits of the Spirit.

Verse 5: “I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned” (vs 5-6). Is this an allusion to the Lake of Fire at the end for those who fail to repent?

Verse 7: “If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.” This is a wonderful promise that we can claim, that God hears our prayers. But those prayers have to be given according to God’s will and purpose, but He hears those prayers and He will answer those prayers.

Verse 8: “In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples.” In other words, this is a tremendous sequence of verses. He proves who is a disciple of Jesus Christ in that they’re bearing much fruit.

We’re all growing at different levels. I’m not saying that we’re all going to have a bumper crop of 100-fold. But as long as you are on the vine and you are producing fruit—maybe a little at first and more later—as some level, that’s pleasing to God. Everyone have different conditions that we’re dealing with. I’m not saying that everyone has to be producing a certain level of production. It’s the idea of the on-going production of fruit.

As we continue to read, Christ focuses on one specific fruit of the Holy Spirit. That is *love*! The ‘agape’ love, the love of God. He’s just talking about bearing fruit, then He goes into this whole section about what it means to be bearing fruit, specifically about love.

Verse 9: “As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; **live in My love**. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love” (vs 9-10). We see what comes forth, on the major fruits that comes forth from the Spirit is Godly love.

Verse 11: “These things I have spoken to you, in order that My **joy** may dwell in you... [another fruit of the Spirit] ...and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: **that you love one another, as I have loved you**” (vs 11-12).

Contemplate that; meditate on that. How does God love and Christ love us now? How has He always loved us? That’s the kind of love that we need to have one for another. That’s a challenge. We’re not built to do that normally. NO! We have a lot of things we need to battle. But Christ says to love your brother, love your neighbor, “...as I have loved you.”

The Epistle of John talks a lot about love. It’s wonderful just to do a Bible study on 1-John. There’s a tremendous amount of information in there regarding the love of God. It’s something that I like to go through periodically because it really just reinforces the elements of what I need to be doing in my life in terms of loving God and loving one another.

We do know that the primary love we need to have is to love God with all of our heart, soul, being and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37<sup>transcriber’s correction</sup>). That’s a summation of the commandments. That’s really what Christ is saying. The love of God is a primary fruit of the Holy Spirit.

1-John 4:7: “Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God.” Take that verse apart and you really find that through the Spirit dwelling in us. God is in us, therefore, we are able to accomplish this. We can’t accomplish this on our own.

Verse 8: “The one who does not love does not know God because God is love.” Here is the greatest attribute that we can ascribe to God. God is love!

Verse 9: “In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, **so that we might live through Him**.” Christ living in us and we living in Christ!

Verse 10: “In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are **duty-bound**... [obligatory] ...to love one another” (vs 10-11). Living proof that Christ is living in you. Living proof that you are bearing fruits of the Holy Spirit.

What I’m leading up to is that John also points out that if we have the love of God being perfected in us, we can have confidence in the day of judgment.

Verse 16: “And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him.” This is reciprocal, we are in God, God is in us!

Verse 17: “By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us...” God wants us to be perfected. We are to be perfect as God is perfect. Peter put it: *we are to be Holy as God is Holy*. We see how this process is of being perfected in love:

“...**so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment** because even as He is, so also are we in this world” (v 17). Any way you look at that here is confidence. This the way we can be sure ***to make our calling and election sure***. If the love of God is dwelling in you, and you’re growing in that love and fulfilling the elements of that love, they your calling is made sure. We don’t have to have doubts. Examine ourselves, brethren:

- Is the love of God living in us?

- Is it growing?
- Are we really applying the spiritual lessons that we need to be doing in our lives?
  - What is love?
  - What is the love of God?
  - How can it be expressed?

I think Paul expressed it very clearly and I want to touch upon this because this is what the love of God is all about:

1-Corinthians 13:4: “Love is patient *and* is kind; love envies not, does not brag about itself, is not puffed up.” In other words, it’s not full of sinful attitude.

Verse 5: “*Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth. *Love* bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love [‘agape’] never fails...” (vs 5-8).

There are many, many messages and sermons, but the fact is that with the love of God in you, these are the characteristics that you should be developing in your life. This is kind of a checklist that we are acquiring the love of God. Go through this checklist. Are we measuring up to what we’re doing? With that, if we can say:

- I need to grow in this area
- I need to overcome here

God is patient and He’s going to give us the time to achieve a higher level of love in our lives.

Brethren, can we know whether or not we have our calling and election sure? *I think that the Scriptures are pointing out here that we can!* We don’t have to live in fear or doubt.

We don’t have to be afraid that we’re going to lose out if we are doing God’s will and we are fulfilling His calling. 1-John talks about fear and being anxious.

1-John 4:18: “There is no fear in the love of *God*; rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment...” I know that we think about this in different ways. But if you have the love of God dwelling in you, what are you afraid you?

- If God is for you, who is against you?
- If God is on your side, who is going to come against you with 10,000 legions to overcome you?
- If God is with you, there is nothing we should fear!

The point is, with the love of God in us, that basically shows that now we don’t have to fear that God is going to cast us away. We can have

confidence that our calling and election is sure if we’re growing in that perfect love.

“...And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of *God*” (v 18). I think you can tie that together.

The one thing that I want to go back to that kind of ties this together is Matt. 7, and it ties in with Matt. 13 and 25.

Matthew 7:16: “You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they?” In other words, you don’t get fruit from some plant that doesn’t produce fruit. You have to go to the right plant.

I know that means to beware of false prophets and that you shall know them by their fruits. But there’s another application that’s missed.

Verse 17: “In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire” (vs 17-19). We’ve been reading those Scriptures regarding John 15, so therefore, this is applying to us, as well.

In other words, how is God going to recognize Himself? *He will know us by our fruits!* You know a person by their fruits and that’s what this Scripture is saying. Likewise, Christ is going to recognize us if He sees Himself in us.

2-Peter actually talks about *making your election and calling sure!* This is something to meditate and really think about, because it ties together the part that we really have to be focused on to be sure that we do not become a foolish virgin.

2-Peter 1:3: “According as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that **through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature...**” (vs 3-4). That’s now! That’s here and now that we can “...become partakers of *the* Divine nature...” if we are growing in the fruits of God’s Holy Spirit.

“...having escaped the corruption *that is in the world* through lust. And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue... [right conduct] ...and to virtue, knowledge... [grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ] ...and to knowledge, self-control... [being able to control your life through Jesus Christ in us] ...and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness... [notice how this is building up] ...and to Godliness, brotherly love... [‘phileo’]

...and to brotherly love, the love of God [‘agape’]” (vs 4-7)—which is at the top of this sort of pyramid. This shows that as you build these fruits that we are demonstrating conversion and the very character of God.

Verse 8: “For *if* these things exist and abound in you, they *will* cause you to be **neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit** in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Not only lacking in the fruit and knowledge, but the internal possession of that fruit.

Verse 9: “But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins.”

If you’re not growing in righteousness and the fruits of the Holy Spirit you’re actually going backward. This is how this applies. If you’re spiritually blind and you feel that you’ve achieved a level of satisfaction, you’re going to go backward, back into the world and sin.

Verse 10: “For this reason, brethren, **be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure**; because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ” (vs 10-11).

In conclusion, ***let us praise God, rejoice that He has revealed to us that if we do all His Word, do His will and continue to build that fruit of righteousness and build all the fruits of God’s Spirit, including the love in us, we can confidence in the Day of Judgment we shall enter into the glorious kingdom of our Father in heaven!***

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 John 3:1-2
- 2) Galatians 5:22-23
- 3) Matthew 25:1-13
- 4) Luke 13:24-28
- 5) Matthew 13:23
- 6) John 15:1-12
- 7) 1 John 4:7-11, 16-17
- 8) 1 Corinthians 13:4-5
- 9) 1 John 4:18
- 10) Matthew 7:16-19
- 11) 2 Peter 1:3-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: Matthew 22:37

Also referenced: Sermon: *In Pursuit of Righteousness*

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