

THE LIFE OF JACOB

By Titus Chu

MESSAGE TWO: THE DIVINE COURTSHIP

INTRODUCTION

We often say that we are for God's economy. We should not consider God's economy as merely something objective or doctrinal. God's economy is something living and active. It is extremely romantic. God's economy gives meaning to God's existence. If we were to ask God, "Who are You?" He would tell us, "I am the Creator and the Upholder of the universe. I am the Almighty and All-sufficient One. But that is not a description of who I really am. Who am I? I am love. My very Person, my very being, is love. And my economy is to produce and generate the divine romance with my love. In my economy I am dispensing myself to you as the very God of love. My love within you will cause you to love Me more, so that we can enjoy the divine romance together."

II. THE DIVINE COURTSHIP

With every romance there must be a courtship. In the divine romance God Himself is courting us. In other words He is dating us. His desire is that we would become His counterpart, His beloved Bride. For this He needs to do three things. He must choose us, predestinate us, and then attract us by unveiling Himself to us.

A. God Chose Us

It is not accurate for us to say, “I have chosen to love God.” No, God chose us. Most of the time we still don’t love God, but we have been chosen by God before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). Before the creation of everything, God chose us. We might ask, “How could He choose us before we were born, even before the universe existed? Did we exist first, or did the universe exist first?” Surely without the universe we could not exist. Yet God would say, “No, that is totally wrong. You have reversed the order of importance. Without you there would not be the universe.”

This is similar to parents preparing a room for their baby before it is born. According to chronological order, the parents first design a nice room as a nursery. Then they set up a crib. Then they buy bottles, toys, and many other things. This all happens before the baby is born. Yet actually it is the baby that is first. Why is there a nice room arranged? Because a baby is coming. Why is there a crib? Because a baby is coming. Why are bottles and toys? Because a baby is coming. Everything surrounds the baby, even though the baby is not born yet. The parents know the baby is coming, and arrange the environment for the sake of the baby.

In the sight of God we are similar to the baby in this example. Everything God has arranged in the entire universe is with us as His focus. God wants to have a Bride. He wants to have a counterpart. This counterpart will become His love, His abode, His expression, His exhibition, and His testimony. God’s whole Person is focused on gaining this counterpart. This is what it means for us to be chosen. God chose us before the foundation of the world. It is because of us that God created the universe.

We can also say it is because of us that God created the galaxy, the solar system, the planet earth, the United States, and the city where we dwell. If we live in Cleveland we should have the realization, “Why does Cleveland exist? It is because of me.” We may think we were born in a certain hospital. Actually the reverse is true. That hospital came into existence for us to be born. Without us there is no need for that hospital.

We should tell the Lord, “Lord, Your courtship is so high, so marvelous. Before I came into being, before I existed, You already had me in view. You chose me. It is because of me that you created the universe, and the solar system, and the galaxy, and the earth. It is because of me that you created the hospital where I was born, and the city where I live, and the school that I attend, and the job where I work.” We should walk down the street in the city where we live and say, “Without me there’s no use for this city. Without a church here this city would not need to exist.” God created everything for His choosing of us as part of His divine courtship. Because of us there is a creation, because of us there is time, because of us there is human civilization, and because of us the world is as it is today under God’s administration. We have been chosen in His divine courtship to become His lover.

We need to change our psychology. We have never realized how high, how marvelous, how heavenly, how crucial, and how important we are. We were chosen before the creation of everything. The university we attend came into existence for our sake. The city we live in exists because we have been chosen. Everything in our life is the setting for God to court us. He desires to date us. He is like a man buying a flower for the woman he loves. But God didn’t buy us a flower; He created the universe for our sake! God can say, “The whole universe is here because I’m ready to date you!” But for some reason we don’t see this. We look at the earth and consider it so beautiful, but we forget it’s reason for existing. God’s feeling is, “The earth is only here for you to live on so I can date you.”

When we graduate from college we should say, “Now my college has accomplished its purpose. It existed only for God to date me and gain me for Himself. Now that I am graduating, this college has no reason to exist.” We were chosen to be lovers of Jesus. But we still think of ourselves as an engineer, or a musician, or whatever we plan to do with our future. God would say, “I never made you to be an engineer, or a musician. I created you and chose you to be my lover. Before you were born, before your grandfather was born, before Adam himself was born, I already chose you. I chose you to love Me with all your life and all your person. I want you to be filled with Me. I want you to be filled with my life and nature. I want you to be my counterpart. I want you to have a romantic life, a life filled with the enjoyment of my love and all my riches. Whatever job you have is actually a side-job. I chose you so that you would eventually become my counterpart, my testimony, and my Bride. This is the reason for your existence.” We must have this deep realization. Everything about our life is for us to become a lover of Jesus Christ. God chose us before the foundation of the world, and we are already marked out to be His lover. This is the first step in God’s courtship.

B. God Predestinated Us

What is the difference between God’s choosing and God’s predestinating? Choosing is in general, while predestinating is in particular. Predestination means literally that our destination was prearranged. Where we were born, where we grew up, where we were saved, and so many other details are all based on God’s predestination. Our race, our culture, and our family were all predestinated. We were not only chosen to be a lover of Jesus in a general way. We were also predestinated so that every part of our life would be sovereignly arranged by the Lord for His divine courtship.

Our predestination is unto sonship (Eph. 1:5). That means God's predestination is unto our maturity. First, God chooses us so that we will be lovers of Jesus Christ. Second, God predestinates us so that we will have particular experiences to bring us to maturity. In every situation in our life the Lord is sovereign to make us His lovers.

Every young person considers his future, because his whole life is ahead of him. But our realization should be, "What is my future? Whatever future God has predestinated for me." God would say to us, "I never predestinated you to be a great artist or the CEO of a major company. That has no value, because it all ends up in a coffin. That is not my predestination. Yes, you may work. To work is not sin. But to not love Me is sin, and to work without my leading is sin." Then we should respond, "Lord, You love me so much. You didn't predestinate me to be someone great in the world. I don't know what I will become. I don't know what future I will have - it makes no difference to me. I just want to be a desperate lover of Jesus Christ." The love we have for the Lord will decide whether we get a job, and what kind of job we will have. In our love for the Lord He may lead us to get a job, or He may lead us to spend some time pursuing Him without distraction. He may even lead us to serve Him full-time. In the divine courtship it is the love of Christ that constrains us (2 Cor. 5:14). We realize that we were predestinated to be a lover of Jesus Christ. We are confined and limited in many different ways for the sake of becoming Christ's counterpart.

May we all pray to the Lord, "Lord, I really love You. There's no one who has a higher value than You. There is no one more lovely than You. Lord, Your love fills my heart and fills my spirit. Oh, I am saturated with Your love! I love You so much, I don't care what happens to me. I don't care about my future. I don't care how people look at me. You predestined me to be a lover of Jesus Christ. Constrain me with Your love until I enter into maturity and become Your counterpart!"

C. God Attracts Us by Unveiling Himself To Us

God's choosing and predestinating took place before we were even born. However, for His divine courtship He must appear to us in the midst of our existence in time. We must be attracted to the Lord by His unveiling of Himself to us. To be chosen and predestinated by the Lord is easy, but to be attracted by the Lord requires that He appear to us. However, no one can see God. The apostle Paul was the last person to see the heavenly Christ with fleshly eyes. But He still desires to unveil Himself to us, because without His appearing there can be no courtship. He appears to us by revealing Himself to us in our spirit.

The problem with the 2nd generation is that nothing is real to them. For the divine courtship there must be something fresh of the living Christ in our experience. But if we are 2nd generation we may know a lot and have heard a lot, but nothing is subjective or experiential. We dare not say, "There is no God," but we dare not say, "There is God," because it does not seem realistic. We know that to say, "I live for nothing but Christ," is only true in the church meetings. Afterwards it's a different story. We want to love the Lord but we can't seem to touch something real. We long for spiritual reality.

Actually if we mean business with the Lord we will go through many times of realizing, "This is a façade. There is too much pretense in my Christian life. I'm talking about spiritual things, I'm involved in spiritual things, yet for some reason I am far from spiritual." At such times there is only one hope: the Lord must come to attract us by unveiling Himself to us. Then all of a sudden everything becomes real. The terms we know become something real. The things we formerly didn't understand become real. We see the Lord. We have a revelation of Jesus Christ. Then He becomes very subjective in our life. We know that He is real. When we have a revelation of Christ Himself in our spirit, that unveiling becomes the substantiating of His divine courtship. Then we truly become a lover of the Lord Jesus. He is no longer doctrinal, and He is no longer merely an object of worship.

Christ becomes a living Savior, and we love Him. We then realize that we are not only chosen, and we are not only predestinated, but in our lives He has appeared to us and attracted us to love Him. This wonderful unveiling should be our life-long experience.

We have said that Jacob was a typical 2nd-generation. He was born to Isaac, and knew all about God from his father. He was born according to God's choosing and predestination. He had many experiences of God's government when He was growing up. But then one day, after he left home and journeyed to his uncle to find a wife, God became real to him. The heavens opened, and God appeared to him. After a genuine subjective experience, the God Jacob had heard about from his youth became his reality.

We should pray to the Lord, "Lord, thank You for Your courtship. Thank You for choosing me, and thank You for predestinating my life. But Lord, please appear to me in my spirit. Please attract Me by unveiling Yourself to me. I know all about You objectively, but I want You to become my spiritual reality. Lord, I want to give my life and my future to You. Draw me, that I would run after You."

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