

└ Introduction

└ Tebow-ing

Tebow-ing



09:30

1. Sometimes we sneer at the guys like Tim Tebow who give God the glory when they make a touchdown.
2. We say things like, 'God isn't concerned about their football game.', or, 'What about the other team?'
3. But there's still a piece of me that admires them, because, even if they are a bit shallow, at least at some level they accept two facts...
4. Whatever advantages or achievements they have in sports, , they come from God.
5. They believe that God is on their side, helping them.
6. God *is* on our side.
7. Do we believe in the advantages that provides?
8. Today we examine what it means to be 'God's people'

└ Introduction

└ God wants a relationship with people

God wants a relationship with people
Jeremiah 31:31-34

31 Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day I took them out of the land of Egypt, in my name I broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and **they shall be my people.** 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

09:32

1. Last week was about how we should be proud of God.
2. This week is about how God is proud of us.

└ Introduction

└ Goals

Goals

- Recognize that God wants a people who choose Him voluntarily
- Understand that God always provides a way and a reward for His people
- Appreciate how unique and special a Christian's relationship with God is

09:33

1. Some tough passages today.

2016-03-20

└ God wants volunteers

 └ God invites, but doesn't coerce

God invites, but doesn't coerce
Matt 22:1-14



All the original guests to the feast had to do was show up.

09:35

1. He's offering them something for the feast. All they have to do is show up.

2016-03-20

└ God wants volunteers

 └ No impostors allowed

No impostors allowed
Matt 22:1-14



- ▶ You've got to have the right clothes to be part of the feast.
- ▶ Sincerity and truth in thought and action is a requirement
- ▶ There's severe consequences for hypocrisy.

09:38

1. Matt. 7:21 Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven but he who does the will of my father.

└ God wants volunteers

 └ Many are called few are chosen.

Many are called few are chosen.
Matt 22:1-14



The people of God have to embrace being different.
You volunteered for this.

09:40

1. God's people will be special because He chose them.
2. But, also because they chose Him.
3. And, we're not different because we're somehow innately better than the world.
4. On the contrary, the people who are called in the parable were the low people in society not the elites.

└ God wants volunteers

 └ You can always choose not to.

You can always choose not to.
Matt 22:1-14



09:42

1. If being a Christian is not what you want, then you can choose to go back to the world
2. When we were considering dropping the Sunday evening service in favor of our current format some people were adamant that a distinction be made between the 'required' Sunday AM service and the 'optional' Sunday afternoon service.
3. *All* services are optional!
4. We're here because we volunteered.
5. So, we should act like we want to be here.

└ God provides for His people

 └ God will always provide for His people

God will always provide for His people
Ezekiel 37



1-14 The Valley of the Dry Bones – God will resurrect His people
15-28 The Joined Stick – God will give His people an everlasting possession.

09:44

1. Ezekiel was a prophet while Judah was in Babylonian captivity.
2. In context it seems like the people had given up hope that God would ever bless them again.
3. These two connected prophecies talk about what God is going to do for His People
4. God's people will win!
5. Dry Bones - God will resurrect His people
6. Joined Stick - God will give them an everlasting possession.

└ God provides for His people

 └ God will resurrect His people

God will resurrect His people
Ezekiel 37:1-14



This is one of the few passages in the Old Testament that directly refers to the resurrection from the dead.

With a New Covenant perspective we see three resurrections eluded to in this prophecy:

- Physical Israel would return from captivity.
- Spiritual renewal in the Holy Spirit under the New Covenant
- Bodily resurrection from the dead at the last day

09:46

1. There are really 3 ways this prophecy is fulfilled. And three ways we're resurrected from the dead
2. Vs. 11 says explicitly that the bones are the whole house of Israel.
3. Says God will put His Spirit within them
4. Land must be figurative. This is premillennialism.
5. They will no longer be a divided kingdom. But, Ezekiel was prophesying during captivity after Israel had already been taken away.
6. Clearly this has to be Christians.
7. The dead shall live and you shall know that I am the Lord
8. Resurrection is a key feature of the people of God.

└ God provides for His people

└ God will give His people an everlasting possession

God will give His people an everlasting possession
Ezekiel 37:15-23



- ▶ "I will ... bring them to their own land."
- ▶ "Make them one nation"
- ▶ "One king"
- ▶ "My dwelling place shall be with them"
- ▶ "I will be their God and they shall be my people"

09:50

1. The people of God always have a land, a place, a possession.
2. The prophecy must refer to spiritual Israel, because restoration of the physical Northern tribes never did occur.
3. With all this emphasis on the land, it's no wonder that the people of Israel had a hard time accepting Jesus, and why the physical restoration of Israel is a key doctrine for premillennialists.
4. They were thinking that God had forgotten them.
5. That times would never get better.

└ God provides for His people

 └ God's people still have a promised land

God's people still have a promised land
Hebrews 11:13-16

13 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14 For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15 If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

09:54

1. Yes, Abraham was promised a physical land, but it was also a spiritual land.
2. The faithful from times past looked forward to the spiritual land, not the physical land.
3. We have that same promised land – entrance into the kingdom of God, and, ultimately, heaven

2016-03-20

└ God's people are special

 └ The Lord made Israel special

The Lord made Israel special
Deut. 10:12-22



- No one else got the benefits that Israel did.
- No one else had the requirements that Israel did.

09:56

1. Same verse quoted in Luke 10 last week about loving the Lord
2. God selected you above all peoples. As a result, serve Him.

└ God's people are special

 └ The Lord made Christians special

The Lord made Christians special
I Peter 2:9-10



- ▶ We are a chosen race (like Israel).
- ▶ We are a royal priesthood (like Judah and Levi put together!).

09:58

1. The Israelites were chosen first
2. We weren't a people until God gave us the opportunity.
3. Investment bankers usually come from rich families.
4. Starting out wealthy has its advantages
5. This passage reminds us that we're the privileged ones.

└ God's people are special

 └ God adopts us as sons

God adopts us as sons
Romans 8:12-17



- "Abba, Father" reveals the closeness we have with God.
- We are heirs with Christ.
- We will be glorified with Christ.

10:00

1. You look at that picture and think, 'Ah, cute'
2. I look at that picture and see something completely different – My son
3. That's what 'Abba, Father' means
4. *What are we heirs of?* The everlasting kingdom prophesied in Ezekiel 37.
5. Some of those blessings we receive now (e.g., entrance into the kingdom)
6. Some of those blessings are yet to be revealed (e.g., resurrection from the dead).

- └ God's people are special

- └ The Lord is with His people from start to finish

The Lord is with His people from start to finish
Romans 8:28-30



- ▶ This passage should encourage us, not simply generate theological discussions.
- ▶ God's preparations for His people started before time.
- ▶ God's support of His people will continue through the end of time.

10:05

1. *Below is a prepared answer if I'm asked about predestination*
2. Calvinists misunderstand the sovereignty of God.
3. I have no issue with God knowing what happens in the future or even knowing ahead of time those who will be lost or saved.
4. God knew ahead of time the poor decisions people would make and what the outcome of those decisions would be (e.g., Rom. 9, Esau, Pharaoh, Judas, Peter).
5. Foreknowledge is not causation, however.
6. God does not 'select' people apart from their own decisions
7. Calvinists assume that our decisions are *totally* driven by either our sinful human nature (over which we have no control) or the miraculous influence of the Holy Spirit (for salvation).
8. This contradicts Matt 22, which we've already discussed.

└ Review

└ They shall be my people

They shall be my people

- ▶ God wants volunteers
- ▶ God makes a way for His people
- ▶ God gives His people eternal possessions
- ▶ God's people are special
- ▶ The best days are still ahead of us

10:10

1. You are special.
2. Act like it.
3. Better days are ahead, because you are God's people.