

Love Is a Choice

Scripture Reading — Genesis 27:1-41; Malachi 1:2-5

You ask, 'How have you loved us?' "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the Lord. "Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated. . . ." — Malachi 1:2-3

God's love is not a copy of -human love. Sadly, human love is often only a poor copy of God's love, and that causes some confusion when we see God acting or speaking in ways that we might think are not very loving. We like to assume that God's love should meet our approval instead of the other way around.

God's comment on Esau is confusing in this way. Jacob and Esau were brothers, but for unstated reasons God chose to accept Jacob and reject Esau. This goes back to the story of Jacob and Esau from Genesis 27. Their father, Isaac, being deceived by Rebekah and Jacob, pronounced a lavish blessing on Jacob but only a limited one on Esau.

This is actually a very important lesson about love. Many of us think of love as a feeling that might lead to certain choices. But real love, God's kind of love, is actually a choice that leads to feelings.

These verses in Malachi are saying that God made a loving choice of Jacob (through no merit on Jacob's part) but not of Esau. Through Jacob, God worked out his plan of salvation that led to Jesus. We might never know the reason for that choice, but we do know that God's love is not led by feelings. We also know that God is not in the habit of rejecting anyone who sincerely wants to be -chosen by him. "I have loved you," says our loving God.

Prayer

Jesus, you died on the cross to open a pathway for all of us to come to you. Thank you for loving us that much. Amen.

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