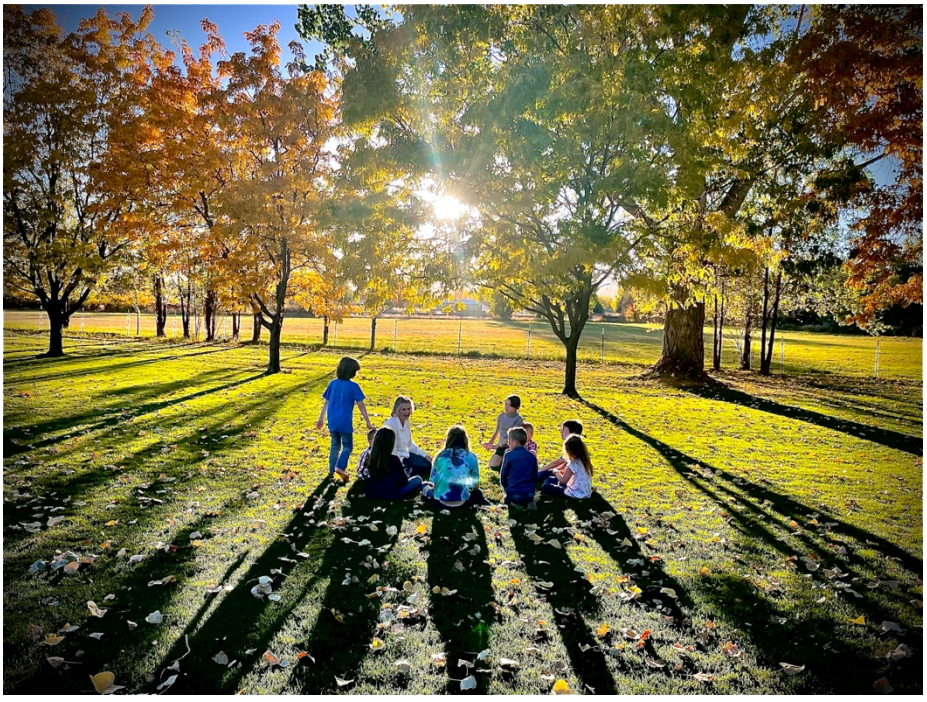
PICK ME! *(Summer Series)*

Titus 3:3-5a, 'At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived; enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy.' (NIV)

As children, at one time or another, we have all been affected by teams being formed of ourselves and our classmates or colleagues. A teacher appointed two someones as Team Captains, and based upon typically our popularity or our ability, we were chosen or not chosen to be on one team or the other. Sometimes, you might have had no ability whatsoever but were the first or third name called because you were 'in'. Sometimes, you might not have been that popular, however, the team captain knew they could capitalize due to your brains or athletic ability. Unfortunately, there were always a couple individuals who never got chosen, who stood awkwardly on the sidelines or at the front of the classroom, dreading the whispers and the groans when they got directed as the last place remaining.

We learned last week, our God does not play games like this. He hand-picked us all. Not because of our pedigree or family name, our superiority or capability. Not because of our beauty or for any reason we might be valued as more lovely or worthy. Not because He felt sorry for you or for me, and certainly not because we could buy a spot or a place or a class or a ticket, or because we won a lottery. But simply because He chose you and He chose me to be His favorite. He chose you to be the beat of His heart, and within me, He breathed His very breath into my lungs, and in both of us, He placed a God-sized, God-shaped hollow that only He could fill. Like Adam, like Eve, we could hide behind trees in the garden of our souls, but He would still find us, see us, cloth us. Like the prodigal child, He would still wrap His garment on His wrist so He wouldn't trip as He ran to greet us, to pull us into a life-giving, forgiving, wipe-the-slate-clean embrace. For you and for me, He chose to cross time and barriers and enemy lines, to redeem all that had been stolen and lost and wrecked. He saw all of my failings and all of your deficiencies and chose to accept us to be on Team Jesus anyway. No more standing on the sidelines, cringing that my name wouldn't be called. No more ducking behind the bleachers, afraid you wouldn't measure up. No more. No more slouching or hustling or begging or becoming someone you are not or selling your soul to be chosen. Because you already have been. By the God of the Universe, you have been chosen.