

Worthy of Your Calling - Ephesians 4:1-8
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Introduction

1. Paul's order of discussion in his epistles—
 - a. The first half of a book is given to *doctrine*.
 - b. The last half of a book is given to *application*.
2. As to doctrine, Ephesians focuses on the wealth of grace and privilege by a new creation.
3. Written from a Roman prison, Ephesians seeks to explain Paul's suffering to the Gentile churches of Asia Minor. Prison looks like defeat. Suffering is not regarded as normal in a successful venture.
4. We need to be prepared to understand the nature of God's sovereign purpose in His plan to unite and restore all things in Christ in light of our present sinful world.
 - a. We are called upon to suffer (Phil. 1:29; Rom. 8:17; 2 Thess. 1:5).
 - b. In His wisdom, God uses relationships to show the world how things should be.

This is the calling to which we have been called.

I. Called to a Calling

1. A calling in which the called are blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places (1:3-14)
 - a. Chosen in Christ and predestined to be holy and blameless as adopted sons of God (vv. 1-3)
 - b. Redeemed and forgiven for the purpose of His plan to unite all the creation in Christ (vv. 7-10)
 - c. Saved by the gospel and sealed by the Spirit to a glorious hope—an inheritance guaranteed until its acquisition (vv. 11-14)
2. by God, rich in mercy and great in love, regenerating, resurrecting, and restoring the spiritually dead by grace (2:1-22)
 - a. To demonstrate immeasurable grace and kindness in Christ Jesus through all eternity (vv. 1-7)
 - b. To demonstrate His workmanship—living out a prepared work (objective; vv. 1-10)
 - c. To demonstrate the building of a household of God, a holy temple—as one people of God, Jew and Gentile (vv. 11-22)

What is that prepared work?
3. A calling to work out *a plan* according to God's eternal purpose, although hidden in ages past (3:1-13).
 - a. A plan for Gentiles to be partakers of the gospel promise (vv. 1-6).
 - b. A plan for God to display His manifold wisdom to rulers and authorities through the church (vv. 7-10; note 6:10-12).
 - c. A plan in which believers will suffer; in it, however, they must not lose heart but live with boldness and confidence through faith (vv. 11-13).

In order to suffer with boldness and confidence, believers must know how to live worthy of their calling.

II. Worthy of the Calling

1. Believers are called to fulfill their calling (purpose) as a new creation, ruling with Jesus Christ in His kingdom (1:20-22; 2:6).
 - a. This purpose (to review) is to make known the manifold wisdom of God (2:10; 3:7-10).
 - b. This purpose, in order to be fulfilled, requires new creation harmony (“unity of the Spirit”).
 - c. New creation harmony requires a walk characterized by love (v. 2; Col. 2:14, 15).
2. Rulers and authorities (3:10) normally act with imperious resolve, tenacity, and authority.
 - a. The wisdom of God—the means whereby He is working out His plan to unite everything in Christ—is to be displayed by other means—humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness (v. 2; Col. 3:12, 13).
 - b. Believers are not to build the kingdom but to maintain it (v. 3). The unity was already inaugurated by Christ. We must do it (imperative).
3. We are to maintain the unity in the bond of peace (v. 3).
 - a. A bond is something that binds together (note v. 16).
 - b. In order to understand what peace is, note Romans 14:17. The Kingdom of God comes in:
 - 1) *Righteousness* (moral) – “the state of things as they ought to be” (Heb. *torah*)
 - 2) *Peace* (relational) – “the state of harmony and concord between parties” (Heb. *shaloam*)
 - 3) *Joy* (consequential) – “the state of satisfaction and contentment—rest” (Heb. *shabat*)

III. The Bond of Peace

1. The bond of peace is supported by the seven-fold confession (vv. 4-6) based on the themes of previous chapters.
 - a. There is *one body* (Christ’s body) and *one Spirit* (the Holy Spirit governing the one body).
 - b. There is *one hope* connected to the calling—the eschatological harmony of all things (1:18-23).
 - c. There is *one Lord* (boss), *one faith* (belief), *one baptism* (brand—identifying mark).
 - d. There is *one God and Father of all*, over all, and through all—recognizing His sovereignty.
2. The bond of peace is administered according to the measure of the grace of Christ’s gift (vv. 7, 8; already given: to grow as an already-unified body).
 - a. Each believer has a vital part by having received from Christ a gift (note v. 16).
 - b. Paul cites Psalm 68:18. The reference is to victory in battle—the victor returning with the spoils of conquest. The church is already triumphant (2 Cor. 2:14; Col. 2:15).

Application

1. In light of the calling of the called, Paul instructs believers in the last half of Ephesians of their responsibility in keeping the “unity in bond of peace.”

We can no longer live duplicitous lives.

If we are comfortable with living a conflicting worldview, are we really His?
2. If we are to see real revival, we must get honest and seek real repentance. It will cost us, but the sacrifice is both necessary and rewarding.