

## Is It Possible?

Ephesians 4:2-3 Sunday AM, September 10, 2023

**Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 3:13-4:3**(NASB95) Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory. <sup>14</sup>For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup>from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, <sup>16</sup>that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup>may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup>and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. <sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. <sup>1</sup>Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, <sup>2</sup>with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, <sup>3</sup>being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We return to Ephesians and because it has been a couple of weeks, let's refresh. Chapter 3 had Paul speaking about God's grace in revealing the mystery of Christ to the apostles and prophets, specifically, *that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.* This grace has been extended to Paul as he was called to *preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches in Christ.* Carrying out God's calling is what has led to Paul's tribulations. THIS is why Paul says, *I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.* Why would other believers lose heart at any struggles Paul endured living and giving the gospel? Perhaps in part because they didn't see WHY Paul would have such trouble if he was a faithful servant of God. They lost sight that fellowship with God includes a mission which must NOT be shrugged off because of hardship or other priorities. Amid the joys of living, the stewardship of work, and the brokenness resulting from sin, God's redemptive plan moves forward. It sounds so amazing, but it seems so impossible at the ground level. And THIS is why Paul prays for these believers, that God would strengthen them *with power through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup>may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup>and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.* Contemplating and living by God's power inside His great love, Paul responds to this prayer with praise. <sup>20</sup>*Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.* Not quite there? Struggle to see the power of God toward you, to be rooted in the love of God for you, struggling with the mission? Then study the God of the gospel.

### \*Hymn #59: I Sing the Mighty Power of God

In light of this enabling power and God's great love for His own, Paul starts the next section of his letter with a call. Are you trusting in Christ for reconciliation with God? Then with that saving faith comes the call to walk worthy of the calling that accompanies true regeneration by the Spirit of God. And like your salvation, this calling is not based on your ability to fulfill it, but it comes from looking to Him for both WHAT HE wants to accomplish as well as His provision to accomplish it. It is a privilege as well as a responsibility to remember that you are not your own. Learn this song with me.

\*Hymn (Powerpoint): I Am Not My Own \*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn **Choir: Give Me Jesus** Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1–

<sup>27</sup>(NASB95) Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. <sup>2</sup>You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. <sup>3</sup>Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. <sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup>And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. <sup>6</sup>There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. <sup>7</sup>But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup>For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>and another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. <sup>12</sup>For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. <sup>13</sup>For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. <sup>14</sup>For the body is not one member, but many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup>But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. <sup>19</sup>If they were all one member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>But now there are many members, but one body. <sup>21</sup>And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; <sup>23</sup>and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, <sup>24</sup>whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, <sup>25</sup>so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. <sup>27</sup>Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

### Offering: \*Doxology:

This salvation and the calling tied to it are meant to be lived in community. Look at all the accompanying attitudes and actions-- <sup>2</sup>with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, <sup>3</sup>being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This is not merely a call to be kind to others, but to recognize that God's work in us draws us closer and closer to other's who live by the Spirit of God. It is not the unity of personality, or the unity of a cause, but the unity of the Spirit—the Oneness Jesus prayed for in John 17. It is found in those who live what the choir sang, Give Me Jesus. This unity lives together—works through things together, and ALL are focused on advancing God's kingdom together. Sing this truth.

### \*Hymn #283: We Are God's People

Did you hear the beautiful picture of different parts working together in I Corinthians? Are you working together in here? The men's book yesterday challenged us to "keep alert for any need that comes up and that you have some ability and desire to take on, and offer to meet it." P. 181 The author went on to say that "most often, spiritual gifts are revealed not through a diagnostic test but through the experience of serving the Lord. The sooner we begin serving where there is a need, the sooner we will begin to learn where the Lord is leading us in our service to Him." p. 182 "But God so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another." Lord, help us to honor you in this way by looking to serve one another. Sing this prayer before Pastor preaches.

### \*Hymn (Powerpoint): Lord, Let Me Serve

Message: Is It Possible? Ephesians 4:2-3

\*Hymn #479: Onward Christian Soldiers

\*Prayer