

## Called to Change

Ephesians 4:17-19 Sunday AM, October 15, 2023

**Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-19** (NASB95) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup> As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; <sup>15</sup> but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even Christ*, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. <sup>17</sup> So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; <sup>19</sup> and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

Walk worthy of the calling with which you have been called. This command speaks of purpose, appointment, and making life choices that line up with that calling. But it also includes doing all this living and serving among those others God has 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. How do we practically work on these attitudes and goals? In part, by focusing the 7 Ones of Unity Pastor preached a few weeks ago. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. Energy directed toward living THIS unity leads to God's goals being paramount. And God graciously gives what is needed to accomplish those goals. <sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. The more you look to God, the more you see not only how unlike Him you are, but also how powerful He is to bring about all He has promised. Just look at the glory of God on display through the work of Christ. He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things! Does it hold your attention? It should which then leads to seeing more of His amazing plan for His people. <sup>11</sup> And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, and these roles are not for merely for power or position, but for God's goal of equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. Is this goal front and center in your mind? This is the sphere of life and ministry for each Christian. Can you be content and busy living for God's kingdom right where you are? Can you truly say, "Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say it is well with my soul?" Lord make it so!

### \*Hymn #493: It is Well

And where did this song end? Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight. What will you see? Christ—THAT is the goal for ALL God's called ones—no longer children, no longer unstable, confused by multitude of competing voices, but <sup>15</sup> but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even Christ*. What does this mean? How do we head there? Right from the start, it speaks of focus. Because the goal is a mature focus, it perseveres through hardship and fog and includes James 1 joy because of the fullness found in Christ. As soon as we hear process and trials, it's easy to take the focus from Christ and look around or to ourselves. Look to Christ—keep looking to Christ. Learn this one with me.

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): I Set My Hope   \*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn   Choir: My Soul Found Rest   Scripture: Ezekiel 33:1–20**

And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, speak to the sons of your people and say to them, 'If I bring a sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one man from among them and make him their watchman, <sup>3</sup> and he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows on the trumpet and warns the people, <sup>4</sup> then he who hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and a sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his own head. <sup>5</sup> 'He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning; his blood will be on himself. But had he taken warning, he would have delivered his life. <sup>6</sup> 'But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned, and a sword comes and takes a person from them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require from the watchman's hand.' <sup>7</sup> 'Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth and give them warning from Me. <sup>8</sup> "When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you will surely die,' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from your hand. <sup>9</sup> "But if you on your part warn a wicked man to turn from his way and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your life. <sup>10</sup> "Now as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus you have spoken, saying, "Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we are rotting away in them; how then can we survive?"' <sup>11</sup> "Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord GOD, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?' <sup>12</sup> "And you, son of man, say to your fellow citizens, 'The righteousness of a righteous man will not deliver him in the day of his transgression, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he will not stumble because of it in the day when he turns from his wickedness; whereas a righteous man will not be able to live by his righteousness on the day when he commits sin.' <sup>13</sup> "When I say to the righteous he will surely live, and he so trusts in his righteousness that he commits iniquity, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered; but in that same iniquity of his which he has committed he will die. <sup>14</sup> "But when I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and he turns from his sin and practices justice and righteousness, <sup>15</sup> if a wicked man restores a pledge, pays back what he has taken by robbery, walks by the statutes which ensure life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. <sup>16</sup> "None of his sins that he has committed will be remembered against him. He has practiced justice and righteousness; he shall surely live. <sup>17</sup> "Yet your fellow citizens say, 'The way of the Lord is not right,' when it is their own way that is not right. <sup>18</sup> "When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, then he shall die in it. <sup>19</sup> "But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and practices justice and righteousness, he will live by them. <sup>20</sup> "Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not right.' O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways."

### Offering: \*Doxology:

Do you feel uncomfortable with passages like we heard from Ezekiel? There was much hope for those who stop sinning and do right, but it was a bit scary for those who stop doing right. Is there any security for us who feel the weight of our calling to be holy? Pastor Jahn's passage for today is a DO NOT passage--walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; <sup>19</sup> and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. As Pastor preaches, listen carefully to the NOT, seeking to expose evidence of a Christless life in YOUR life. Respond with the final hymn, repenting and calling on God for cleansing. Then, get back to God's focus of submitting to the Headship of Christ by contributing to the growth of the body to the fullness of Christ. This requires life FROM Christ which begins by accepting His payment for your sins and the righteousness of Christ—His active obedience placed on your account. Your hope to walk worthy of the calling rests here.

### \*Hymn (Powerpoint): His Robes for Mine

Do NOT be like the Gentiles. I Peter says BE HOLY as God is holy. It sounds too hard. Look to the Living Christ—the One who intercedes for His own before the Father, the One who purifies His church until it is without spot. This final song says Jesus satisfies our deepest longings. Can Jesus do that? Can He break the hold of sinful desires that seem so much stronger? Yes, He can. As Pastor preaches about change, rest in Jesus.

### \*Hymn #503: Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting

Message: Called to Change Ephesians 4:17-19   \*Hymn #438: Cleanse Me   \*Prayer