

Called to Change Pt. 2

Ephesians 4:20-21 Sunday AM, October 22, 2023

Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-21 (NASB95) And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ 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; ¹⁵ but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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, ¹⁸ 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; ¹⁹ and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. ²⁰ But you did not learn Christ in this way, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

Walk worthy of the calling to which you have been called. You are to do this inside relationships starting with those others God has called to Himself. God provides all necessary to fulfill your calling. ⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. But we don't determine our own service for God. God graciously gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers for God's goal of equipping each saint 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. These goals keep us from aimless wandering because of different voices of truth with different goals. We grow to the fullness of Christ by speaking the truth in love leading to each member carrying out their part of the growth of the body under the headship of Christ. There is life, love, and above all, growth among the people of God when Christ is given His position as Head of the church. What does it mean for Christ to be head of the church? Christ is the focus, the enabler—His goals are ours and they are accomplished by His means. Each member of Christ's body finds hope and life when they look to Christ. He is our everything! Church, Sing of the gracious mercies of Jesus!

*Hymn (Powerpoint): I Will Sing

If Christ is truly your living Head, there WILL be change. ¹⁷ So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk. How do they walk? They don't understand heavenly wisdom and they do NOT have life from God. In fact, they are callous and hardened in their relationship with God and live for themselves, fulfilling their own desires. True Christians shudder when they hear this because THIS lifestyle separates them from relationship with Christ. While sinful and prone to wander from Christ, true Christians did not learn Christ in this way. Christians grow. They change. Because Christians have a different source of change than those outside Christ, they have less and less in common with those outside of Christ when it comes to focus, goals, and source of resources for life. Does this describe you? Are you changing to be like Jesus? HE must be the focus.

*Hymn #387: O to Be Like Thee *Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn Choir: The Potter Knows the Clay

Scripture: Isaiah 63:15–64:12 (NASB95) Look down from heaven and see from Your holy and glorious habitation; Where are Your zeal and Your mighty deeds? The stirrings of Your heart and Your compassion are restrained toward me. ¹⁶ For You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us And Israel does not recognize us. You, O LORD, are our Father, Our Redeemer from of old is Your name. ¹⁷ Why, O LORD, do You cause us to stray from Your ways And harden our heart from fearing You? Return for the sake of Your servants, the tribes of Your heritage. ¹⁸ Your holy people possessed Your sanctuary for a little while, Our adversaries have trodden it down. ¹⁹ We have become like those over whom You have never ruled, Like those who were not called by Your name. ¹ Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down, That the mountains might quake at Your presence— ² As fire kindles the brushwood, as fire causes water to boil— To make Your name known to Your adversaries, That the nations may tremble at Your presence! ³ When You did awesome things which we did not expect, You came down, the mountains quaked at Your presence. ⁴ For from days of old they have not heard or perceived by ear, Nor has the eye seen a God besides You, Who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him. ⁵ You meet him who rejoices in doing righteousness, Who remembers You in Your ways. Behold, You were angry, for we sinned, We continued in them a long time; And shall we be saved? ⁶ For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷ There is no one who calls on Your name, Who arouses himself to take hold of You; For You have hidden Your face from us And have delivered us into the power of our iniquities. ⁸ But now, O LORD, You are our Father. We are the clay, and You our potter; And all of us are the work of Your hand. ⁹ Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD, Nor remember iniquity forever; Behold, look now, all of us are Your people. ¹⁰ Your holy cities have become a wilderness, Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. ¹¹ Our holy and beautiful house, Where our fathers praised You, Has been burned by fire; And all our precious things have become a ruin. ¹² Will You restrain Yourself at these things, O LORD? Will You keep silent and afflict us beyond measure?

Offering: *Doxology:

No matter how much we hear of God, His goodness to us, His righteous ways, and warnings for disobedience, we are often sloppy with God's words. Did you hear the cry of Isaiah? We are in a mess. We have walked like those outside your care who disobey and rebel—all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment. There is no one who calls on Your name, who arouses himself to take hold of You; for You have hidden Your face from us And have delivered us into the power of our iniquities. Where do you find yourself here? Do you have some habit, some besetting sin that controls you? Do you find yourself drifting from seeking God's kingdom first or perhaps having to admit that you just don't seek His kingdom first at all? Acknowledge your true condition before God and take His yoke, submit to His process of molding you. He knows you—how much you can take, what is required for you to be submissive to His will. Respond to Him like the humble, broken ones in Isaiah. ⁸ But now, O LORD, You are our Father, We are the clay, and You our potter; And all of us are the work of Your hand. Remember how He called you? This is how He leads you.

*Hymn #480 (Red): In Tenderness He Sought Me

Though His process of shaping you hurts and takes time, look to Him and follow. Give the potter freedom to shape you. Trust the Good Shepherd to shepherd your heart.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): Shepherd

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*Hymn #325 (Red): More Like the Master *Prayer