

8. CONFIDENT LIVING IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

If you could learn one new personal skill, what would it be? Why?



Think about the people who serve your church through their natural gifts and abilities. What are some of the gifts they use for ministry?

Paul is in isolation. He is under house arrest, chained to a Roman guard awaiting trial before Nero. In the previous chapter he prayed for his Christian friends in Ephesus that they might know and experience the love and power of God, and that they will be filled with all the fulness of God.

Now, assuming that is true, what would happen, what would that look like? Having considered the theological reality, he launches into the practical outcomes, turning from principles to practice.

Go to break out groups and read Ephesians 4:1-16 – find a translation that you don't normally use and read it as though this was the first time you read this letter.

What strikes you and what challenges you?

1. What questions do you have that arise out of this passage? Discuss as a group.
2. Paul begins this section of his letter with an urgent plea for the Ephesians to “walk worthy of the calling” with which they had been called. What does he mean by this? Why does he start with this topic?
3. **Return to the group** and share your findings.
4. Describe the ‘code of conduct’ or ‘ethical standards’ that you have/had in your workplace. Describe the Christian’s ‘code of conduct’. Who calls us on it?

5. Before Paul begins his conversation on grace gifts he includes a list of Christian 'graces' vv 2-3 that maintain unity. How are these important in the context of unity and what it means to 'walk worthy of the calling'?

6. If unity is about oneness (see vv 4-5) then how do we navigate through our differences?

7. What does Paul mean when he says ⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift? (we'll consider grace gifts next week)

8. What obstacles impede the maturing of an individual Christian or a whole congregation?

9. How does Christ function with the church like the head on a body? vs 15

10. How is it that 'love' permeates this whole passage yet again? (cf Romans 12-9-18; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

Prayer

Father, how holy and great is your promise. You have been so good to us and have gifted us richly. Renew our vision; help us to see heaven. Help us to be active in the right places: the business of serving you, our family, each other, and the world where we live and work.

Journaling

Take a few moments to record your personal insights from this lesson.

What specific steps can you take today to 'walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called'.