

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost – August 1, 2021

“Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called...”
(Ephesians 4:1)

Paul begins with telling the members of the church in Ephesus about having Christ in their inner being and being filled with love so the church will be filled with the fullness of God (3:14-20). Paul now turns to helping the church see its call in the body of Christ, a call of unity in the bond of peace. All those who were deeply divided from one another are being brought near in Christ, who is our peace. The Jews and the Gentiles who were strangers to God, are now being made one through “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God” (vs. 4).

We are coming together and are no longer aliens and strangers. The hidden plan of God is now being revealed to bring all things together in Christ. Paul is speaking to the church trying to get them to see the parts they are called to in God’s grand scheme. He is helping them (and us) to see that some are called to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers (vs. 11) in order to equip the saints and to build up the body of Christ until we all are unified in faith.

These calls are gifted to us through the one Spirit who makes us into one body and are far from accidental. They are part of God’s plan that is unfolding in us and through us which was begun in our baptism. Paul tells us God is at work in us and is giving us these calls so we might grow into the fullness of Christ.

But the call God puts on our lives is not always easy. It takes practice, dedication, time, and constant effort to be at least somewhat capable in our call. God grants us time and we continue to work and grow into what God has called us to do. It’s not just practice we need, as Paul said, but we also need those who help us to understand our calls and to labor at them faithfully. We need the stories of the faithful ones, the “saints,” who have gone before us.

May we learn to faithfully work at the unity Jesus calls us to, for the sake of a world broken apart by sin, death, and the devil. May we take up our call in the work that Jesus is doing in bringing all things together in himself and making all things new. May the Lord continue to help us! Amen.

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