Our Calling (part 1)

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I want to speak to you this morning from the fourth chapter of Ephesians. We will begin reading from the first verse:

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Ephesians 4:1-13

Beloved, we have for several mornings been speaking concerning the gifts. And I believe that the Lord would have us this morning further consider another side of the gifts. I shall be more or less speaking to preachers, and to those who desire to be preachers. I would like to utter those same words Paul utters in 1 Corinthians 14:5:

I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that

ye prophesied…

I believe there is no way to make proclamation but by the Spirit. And I believe that they that are sent are called and chosen of God to be sent. And so as we go forth into this chapter, I trust that everyone will understand what his vocation is in the Spirit, and what the Lord demands of us as preachers.

We should be able in the face of God and the presence of His people to behave ourselves so comely and pleasing to the Lord that we always leave behind us a life of blessing and power without gendering strife.

It is a great choice to become a preacher of the Gospel, to handle the Word of life. We that handle the Word of life ought to be well built on the lines of common sense, judgment, and not given to anything which is contrary to the Word of God. There should be in us all the time such deep reverence towards God and His Word that under all circumstances we would not forfeit our principles on the lines of faith that God had revealed unto us by the truth.

Today I believe God will show us how wonderful we may be in the order of the Spirit for God wants us to be always in the Spirit so rightly dividing the Word of truth that all who hear it shall be like strength to weakness. It shall bring oil to the troubled heart. It shall bring rest. The Word of God shall make us know that having done all we may stand in the trial.

God would have us to know that there is strength by the power of the Spirit, of an equipment of character to bring us into like-mindedness with the Lord. We must know to be baptized in the Holy Ghost is to leave your own life, as it were, out of all questioning; leave yourself out of all pleasing, and in the name of Jesus come into like-mindedness.

How He pleased God! How He brought heaven to earth, and all earth moved at the mightiness of the presence of heaven in the midst. We must see our vocation in the Spirit, for God hath chosen us. We must remember that

it is a great choice. Turning to the tenth chapter of Romans, we read:

And how shall they preach, except they be sent?…How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10:15

We want to be sent. It is a great thing to be called of God to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. You have in this land, and we have in our land, men of note and of authority, who are looked to on the lines of socialistic problems. I often think that Lloyd George has a wonderful time but not a time like a preacher. He only preaches of natural sources but the man who handles the Word of God preaches life immortality that swallows up life. When we come into this blessed life we know we are teaching principles and ideals which are for life eternal.

God has given to us in the Spirit, and behold, we are spiritual children today, and we must know that we have to be spiritual all the time. God forbid that we should ever be like the Galatian church, after we have been in the Spirit, we could come in the flesh. You are allowed to go into the Spirit but you are never allowed to come in the flesh after you have been in the Spirit.

And so God gives such an idea of this high order in the Spirit that we may be moved by its power to see how we may change strength and come into all the line of faith in God. Let me turn to the first verse of this wonderful fourth chapter of Ephesians:

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

Here is Paul in prison. If I can take a word from anybody, I can take it from anyone who is in prison. I have never read a book but the Bible, but there are some things I have read out of Pilgrims Progress which have helped me very much. It was when he was in prison that God wakened him on so many wonderful lines of thought. How Paul must have read the Word

right in the hearts of those who came and went when he was bound with chains for two full years. He could speak about a fullness, freedom, power, and joy although he was bound with chains.

My brothers, there is something in the Gospel different from anything else. And if these men could go through such hardships – read the first epistle of Peter and you will see how they were scattered. God says that the world wasn't worthy of such material as God was filling with His power that were in dens and caves of the earth.

Oh brother and sister, there have been some wonderful gems passed through the world touched by the Master's hand. There have been some wonderful men in the world who have caught the glory as the rays have shone from His lips by the power of His expression. As they beheld Him they have been fascinated with Him. And I can fairly see as Peter drew near the time of his departure, as Jesus said:

…When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. John 21:18

And as Peter drew near to the portals of glory, he wished to die with his head downwards. My word! What grace incarnated in a human casket that it should have such ideals of worship.

Oh, beloved, God is a real essence of joy to us in a time when it seems barrenness, when it seems nothing can help us but the light from heaven far above the brightness of the sun. Then that touches you, then that changes you, and you realize nothing is worthwhile but that.

How he speaks to us when he is in prison, about "the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness" (Ephesians 4:1,2). He speaks unto the preacher. Let no person in this place think that he

cannot become a preacher. Let none think he cannot reach this ideal of lowliness and meekness. God can bring us there.

Some preachers get an idea that nobody ought to say a word till they are established. I like to hear the bleating of the lambs. I like to hear the life of the young believer. I like to hear something coming right from heaven into the soul as they rise the first time with tears coming down their eyes, telling of the love of Jesus.

The Holy Ghost fell upon a young man outside a church. He went into the church where they were all so sedate. If anything had to move in that church out of the ordinary, my word! It would be extraordinary. And this young man with his fulness of life and zeal for the Master got into ejaculating and praising the Lord, and making manifest the joy of the Lord, and he disturbed the old saints.

An old man one day was reading the Psalms quietly. It touched a young man sitting behind him who was filled with the Holy Ghost, And the young man shouted, “Glory!” Said the old man, “Do you call that religion?”

The father of the young man to whom we referred was one of the deacons of the church. The other deacons got round him and said, “You must talk to your boy, and give him to understand that he has to wait till he is established before he manifests those things.”

So his father had a long talk with the boy, and told him what the deacons said. “You know,” he said, “I must respect the deacons, and they have told me they won’t hate this thing. You have to wait till you are established.”

As they neared their home their horse made a full stop. He tried to make it go forward and back but the horse would not move for anything.

What is up with the horse?” asked the father of the son. “Father,” replied the boy, “this horse has got

established.”

I pray God the Holy Ghost that we will not get established in that way. God, loose us up from these old, critical, long-faced, poisoned kind of countenances, which haven’t seen daylight for many days. They come into the sanctuary and are in a terrible way. May the Lord save Pentecost from going to dry rot. Yea, deliver us from any line of sentimentality, anything which is not reality. For remember, we must have reality of supernatural quickening till we are sane and active, and not in any way dormant, but filled with life, God working in us mightily by His Spirit.

We must always be on the transforming position, not on the conforming condition, always renewing the mind, always renovated by the mighty thoughts of God, always being brought into line with that which God has said to us by the Spirit, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”

Lord, how shall we do it? Can a man be meek and lowly, and filled with joy? Do they work together? “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” The depths of God come in, in lowliness and meekness and make the heart love. There is no heart can love like the heart that God has touched.

Oh, that love that is made to love the sinner! There is no love like it. I always feel I can spend any time with the sinner. Oh, brother, there is a love which is God’s love! There is a love which only comes by the principles of the Word of God. “He loved us and gave Himself for us.”

When that meekness and lowliness of mind take hold, the preacher is moved by His Creator to speak from heart to heart and move the people. For without we are moved by an inward power and ideal of principles, we are never worth. We must have ideals which come from the throne of God. We must live in the throne, live on the throne, and let Him be enthroned, and then He will

lift us to the throne.

TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION: “Out of the depths He has called us, into the heights He has brought us, unto the uttermost He has saved us to make us kings and priests unto God. For we are His property, His own, His loved ones. Therefore He wants to clothe us upon, with the gifts of the Spirit, and make us worthy for His ministry.”

Glory to God! Thank the Lord!

“With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love” (Ephesians 4:2).

Oh, how it is needed, “forbearing one another in love.” Oh, how this is contrary to hardness of heart; how this is contrary to the evil powers; how this is contrary to the natural mind. It is a divine revelation, and you cannot forbear till you know how He has been with you in the same thing. It is God’s love toward you that makes tender, compassionate love one toward another.

It is only the broken, contrite heart which has received the mark of God. It is only those in that secluded place where He speaks to thee alone, and encourages thee when thou art down and out, and when no hand is stretched out to thee, He stretches out His hand with mercy and brings thee into a place of compassion. And now, you cannot think evil; now you cannot in any way act hard. God has brought you into long-suffering, with tenderness, with love.

Oh, this love, brother! Many a time my two brothers have been under conviction and have wept under conviction as I have tried to bring them into the light. But up till now neither of them is in the light. I believe God will bring them.

In the church of God, where a soul is on fire, kindled with the love of God, there is a deeper love between me and that brother than there is between me and my earthly brother. Oh, this love that I am speaking about is divine love, it is not human love. It is higher than

human love, it is more devoted to God. It will not betray. It is true in everything. You can depend upon it. It won't change its character. It will be exactly as He would act for you will act with the same spirit, for as He is so are ye in this world.

As you rise into association with Him in the Spirit, as you walk with Him in the light as He is in the Light, then the fellowship becomes unique in all its plan. I pray God that He will help us to understand it that we shall be able to put off and put on. We shall be able to be clothed upon as we have never been, with another majestic touch, with another ideal of heaven.

No one can love like God. And when He takes us into this divine love we shall exactly understand this Word, this verse, for it is full of entreaty, it is full of passion and compassion, it has every touch of Jesus right in it. It is so lovely:

"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love."

Isn't it glorious? You cannot find it anywhere else. You cannot get these pictures in any place you go to. I challenge you to go into any library in the world and find words coined or brought forth like these words, without they are copied from this Word. It isn't in nature's garden, it is in God's. It is the Spirit explaining, for He alone can explain this ideal of beatitudes. They are marvelous, they are beautiful, they are full of grandeur, they are God's. Hallelujah!

I hope you are having a good time, for it is just filling me with new wine this morning. Oh, it is lovely!

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

This is one of the main principles of this chapter. Beloved, let us keep in mind this very thought today. I am speaking this morning, by the grace of God, to the preacher. It should never be known that any preacher caused any distraction, or detraction, or any split, or

disunion in a meeting. The preacher has lost his unction and his glory if he ever stoops to anything that would weaken the assembly in any way.

The greatest weakness of any preacher is to draw men to himself. It is a fascinating point, but you must be away from fascination. If you don't crucify your "old man" on every line, you are not going into divine lines with God. When they wanted to make Jesus king, He withdrew Himself to pray. Why? It was a human desire of the people. What did He want? His Kingdom was a spiritual Kingdom. He was to reign over demon powers. He was to have power over the passions of human life. He was to reign so supremely over everything which is earthly, that all the people might know He was divine.

He is our pattern, beloved. When they want to make anything of us, He will give you grace to refuse it. The way to get out is to find there is nothing in the earth which is worthy of Him; that there is no one in the world who is able to understand but He; that everything will crumble to the dust and become worthless. Only that which is divine will last.

"Be not afraid to ask, because God is on the throne waiting to answer your request."

Every time you draw anyone to yourself it has a touch of earth. It does not speak of the highest realm of thought of God. There is something about it which cannot bear the light of the Word of God. Keep men's eyes off you, but get their eyes on the Lord. Live in the world without a touch or taint of any natural thing moving you. Live high in the order and authority of God, and see that everything is bearing you on to greater heights and depths and greater knowledge of the love of God.

You will help any assembly you go to, and everybody will get a blessing and will see how much richer they are because you brought them Jesus. Only Jesus! And He is too big for any assembly, and He is little enough to fill every heart. We will always go on to learn of Him. Whatever we know, the knowledge is so small to what

He has to give us. And so God's plan for us in giving us Jesus, is all things, for all things consist in Him.

"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made"
(John 1:3).

"...in him we live, and move, and have our being..."
(Acts 17:28).

And when it is a spiritual being and an activity of holiness, see how wonderfully we grow in the Lord. Oh, it is just lovely!

TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION: "Yea, it is the Lord Himself. He comes forth clothed upon to clothe thee in thy weakness, to strengthen thee in thy helplessness, to uphold thee in the limitation of thy knowledge, to unfold the mysteries of the Kingdom in the dire straits where two ways meet, and you know not where to go. He says, 'This is the way.' When thou art in such a straitened place that no hand but God is able to lead thee out, then He comes to thee and says, 'Be strong and fear not, for I am with thee.'"

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord of glory! He is the everlasting King, and will reign forever and ever and ever. Glory! Glory! Amen!

TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION: "God has spoken and He will make it clear, for He is in the midst of thee to open out thy mind and reveal unto thee all the mysteries of the Kingdom, for the God of grace is with thee. For God is greater than all unto thee. He is making thy way straight before thee, for the Lord is He that comforteth thee as He comforted Israel, and will lead thee into His power, for His right hand is with thee to keep thee in all thy ways lest thou shouldst dash thy foot against a stone, for the Lord will uphold thee."

How beautiful is the Scripture coming to us this morning! How lively it appears to us! And now we can understand something about the fourteenth chapter of

First Corinthians:

…I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.
Verse 15

So God is bringing us right into the fullness of the Pentecostal power as given in the first days. God wants us t know that after we have been brought into this divine life with Christ, we are able to speak in the Spirit, and we are able to sing in the Spirit; we are able to speak with the understanding, and sing with the understanding also. Ah, hallelujah this good day!

I think I ought to say a few more words concerning: “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3).

Beloved, I want you, above all things, to remember that the church is one body. She has many members, and we are all members of that one body. At any cost we must not break up the body but rather keep the body in perfect unity. Never try to get the applause of the people by any natural thing. Yours is a spiritual work. Yours has to be a spiritual breath. Your word has to be the Word of God. Your counsel to the church has to be so that it cannot be gainsaid. You have to have such solid, holy reverence on every line so that every time you handly anybody you handle them for God, and you handle the church as the church of God. By that means you keep the church bound together.

As the church is bound together in one Spirit, they grow into that temple in the Lord, and they all have one voice, one desire, and one plan. And when they want souls saved, they are all of one mind. I am speaking now about spiritual power. You get them into the mind of the Spirit with Christ, and all their desires will be the same desires of Christ the Head. And so nothing can break the church on those lines.

As preachers you must never try to save yourself on any line. You must always be above mentioning a financial

matter on your side. Always before God in the secret place mention your need, but never bring it to an assembly; if you do, you drop in the estimation of the assembly. You are allowed to tell any need belonging to the assembly or the church management, but on a personal line never refer to yourself on the platform.

If you preach faith you must live it, and a man is not supposed to preach without he preach a living faith. And he must so impress it upon the people that they will always know God has taken us on for a special plan aand that we are not ordinary men. After we are called of God and chosen for Him, we are not again to have ordinary men's plans. We ought to have ideals of God only.

Another thing which I think is perhaps more essential to you than anything else: you preachers, never drop into an assembly and say the Lord sent you, because sometimes the assembly has as much on as she can manage. But it is right for you to get your orders from heaven, and for God to switch the same order somewhere else that will make the first call and you will be dropping into the call. Never make a call without you are really sent. Be sure you are sent of God.

Brothers, can you be out of God's will when you hear His voice? "My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me." Oh, that God today shall help us by the mind of the Spirit to understand. I believe God has a message on fire. He has men clothed by God. He has men sent by God. Will you be the men? Will you be the women?

You ask, "Can I be the man? Can I be the woman?" Yes, God says, "Many are called, but few are chosen." Are you the chosen ones? Those who desire to be chosen, will you allow God to choose you? Then He will put His hand upon you. And in the choice He will give you wisdom, He will lead you forth, He will stand by you in the straitened corner, He will lead you every step of the way, for the Lord's anointed shall go forth and bring forth fruit, and their fruit shall remain.

TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION: “Behold, now is the day of decision. Yield now while the moment of pressure by the presence of God comes. Yield now and make your consecration to God.”

The altar is ready now for all who will obey.