



TAKE THE CALL

(EPHESIANS 4:1)

Welcome back to Ephesians. It was way back in September that we finished studying through the first three chapters of this six-chapter Bible book written by the Apostle Paul. As you may recall, we then took a break from our Ephesians teaching series to do the TRANSFORMED series as a church family, followed by a focus for NCFF on the holiday themes of Thanksgiving, Advent, and New Year's 2023. Today, we're picking up where we left off in Ephesians. To start, I have to tell you, I honestly love this book and have personally read it more times than any other book in my Bible. The first three chapters teach, *This Is What God Has Done For You* ... **LEARN IT**. The second three chapters teach, *This Is How God Says To Conduct Yourself* ... **LIVE IT**. Ephesians gives us a very clear, concise, and compelling understanding of how to follow Jesus in this fractured world of ours. It tells us what to believe and how to behave. This is simple and straightforward stuff. It's like a manual for the Christian life. Truthfully, if you want a no-nonsense "Reader's Digest" approach to godly living, then Ephesians is for you. So, "part two" of Ephesians starts by informing us that God has a "call" in to you and me. We need to pick up the receiver and take it!

*Therefore I (Paul), a prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk (live) in a manner worthy of **THE CALLING**. (Ephesians 4:1)*

PAUL'S STREET CRED

PAUL'S COMMUNICATION STYLE

GOD'S CALL TO YOU

1. (2 Timothy 1:9) Called to be ...
2. (Hebrews 3:1) Called to the...

3. (Romans 9:25) Called to be ...
4. (1 Corinthians 1:9) Called to be ...
5. (Hebrews 2:11) Called to be ...
6. (Romans 8:28) Called to be ...
7. (Colossians 3:15) Called to ...
8. (Philippians 3:14) Called to ...
9. (Galatians 5:13) Called to ...

TAKEAWAYS FOR TODAY

Make no Mistake ...

Make the Right Move ...

Make Yourself Happy ...

FOR THOUGHT & TALK

Take no more than 5 minutes to quickly review the main points from Pastor John's message. As you discuss the questions, don't expect to answer all of them. Just discuss the ones your group would most like to explore together. *Remember, the goal of your small group is to grow together relationally, to **apply** God's Word to our daily living, and to pray for one another and our church.*

1. One of the big questions many people have regarding the study of the Bible has to do with the trustworthiness of the Bible. How do we know it is true? The Apostle Peter believed it was true. He wrote ... *Above all, when it comes to the Bible, realize this: No prophecy or part of the Bible was ever thought up by a prophet on his own; rather, the human writers were moved by the Holy Spirit, the Divine Author, who spoke from God.* (2 Peter 1:20-21). Why is it important that the Bible is true? What evidence would you share with someone else to help convince them that they can count on the Bible? On a personal level, how has the truthfulness of the Bible made a difference in your life?
2. Even though our focus this week is zeroed in on Ephesians 4:1, read aloud the broader context of Ephesians 4:1-6 from the NASB and the NLT. The first half of Ephesians (chapters 1-3) is all about our **belief system** as followers of Jesus. The second half of Ephesians (chapters 4-6) is all about our **behavioral strategy** as followers of Jesus. What's the connection between what we really believe and how we actually behave?
3. Paul called himself *a prisoner of the Lord*. The two ways to understand that statement are that Paul was a prisoner of Rome and that Paul was a "prisoner" of Jesus. To be a prisoner of Jesus is to have your heart and mind **captivated** by Christ. What does it mean, intellectually and emotionally, to be captivated by Jesus? What are some ways that you've experience being captivated by our Savior?
4. Why is it important for *you* as a Christian to realize that you have a **CALLING** directly from Christ? Describe what you think that calling is. Hint: There are aspects to our calling that we share in common with every Christian, and there are personalized aspects to that calling which God has "tailor made" for us as individual Christians. Try to think of both the shared aspects and the personalized aspects that He has for you.
5. As you look at all of the nine descriptions of **THE CALLING** that PJ shared from Scripture, which one (or two) most connected with your heart and what you needed to hear God saying to you from Ephesians 4:1? How can we help other people who are not Christians to see for themselves just how wonderfully captivating our Jesus truly is?