

# God's Calling

Ephesians 4.1-6

## Key Points:

- This section marks the turning point in Paul's letter to the Ephesian Christians. Up until this point, Paul's focus has been on revealing who God is and who we are in Christ. Now comes the point where the attention shifts to what that means for us - how does this effect our lives?
- Any and all ethical guidance from this moment on is grounded in the truth that "*You have been called by God.*" There is a calling on your life - God has sought you, rescued you, saved you, loved you, chosen you, freed you, accepted you, redeemed you - and a purpose as a child of God in Christ. One of the battles we often face is against the lie of insignificance - the truth of our calling speaks directly against that lie.
- We've been called into this new identity and Paul begs that we would act like it! [cf. the story of the 'generic' superhero that makes a mistake and pretends that they haven't got their power anymore]. The petition is that the Ephesians [and us] should live like who we **are** rather than who we **were**. Rather than being restrictive, rules-based religion, God's way is freeing relationship-based identity.
- The first area that Paul considers where Christians should act like who they're called to be is how we relate to one another. He highlights key character traits that represent the value God places on Unity - Humble, Gentle, Patient, and Putting up with each other in love. Humility is a key one here and can be defined as 'agreement with God'. It impacts both how we see ourselves (agreeing with what God says is true about us) and about how we see and thus treat others. Asking ourselves the question when we're in a difficult relationship - how does God see this person? - is the most valuable thing (if not extremely difficult!) that we can do.

## Questions:

1. How do you react when the phone rings? What if it were God calling?
2. Do you struggle with the lie of insignificance? [Insignificance is believing that we are lower in value, of less importance and status than another, poorer in quality, below average.] How do you react to the truth that God has called you, that you have a purpose?
3. Where has God called you from, and where is He calling you to?
4. Take some time to remind yourselves from Ephesians ch.1-3 of the new identity into which God has called us. Are these characteristics evident in your life? Where do you struggle to live in the identity that God has called you?
5. Paul is concerned that the unity amongst the church (and beyond) that God has established through the spirit be maintained (v.3). Is unity important to you? Should it be? Do you consider Springfield to demonstrate unity? Why? Why not?
6. There are 4 characteristics Paul suggests as key to maintaining unity - Humility, Gentleness, Patience and Putting up with one another in love. Why are these important? Where do you struggle to demonstrate these traits? A key question to ask yourself: Where there's relational conflict - Do I pray for other people to change? Or do I pray for more humility, gentleness, patience etc.?
7. If we use a definition of humility as 'agreement with God', how would being humble affect us in the way we see ourselves? What about in the way we see and treat other people (especially with those who we find difficult!)?