

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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The Assignment of Resurrection Day

by Dan Trygg

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what is the rich-abundance of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inworking of the strength of His might²⁰ which He inworked in the Christ, raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenly places...”
Ephesians 1:18-20

“Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day;⁴⁷ and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ ...but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:46-49

God is *sooo* amazing! *Sooo* good and gracious! This first chapter of Ephesians is a virtual catalogue of things He *has done* for us, ...things He *promises to do* for us, ...as well as things He *is willing to do* for us. All in all, it is an amazing list of things to ponder and look forward to, ...with wonder, expectation and the vision of faith. It should spur us to *bow down* in worship, *lift our faces* in gratitude and praise, and to *move forward* in confidence that God's power is present and working within us, as we seek to do His will.

Paul was praying, ...ongoingly praying and interceding..., that *we might develop the skill* to know how to press in to experientially-know God, ...and that *He might open up to us insights, revelations and the intimate sharing of His heart to ours*. There are two sides to this. We must seek and learn, ...and God must share Himself with us. We already know what His heart is in this regard. He has invited us *multiple times* in the scriptures to seek Him. His assurance is that *He will let Himself be found by us* (Deut. 4:29; 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 15:2; Isa. 55:6; Jer. 29:13,14). He declared that, just as He shows sinners the way, and leads the humble and teaches them, in the same way He has reserved His intimate counsel for those who reverence Him (Psa. 25:8,9,14). He *wants to* be known by us. He is *intimate* with the righteous (Prov. 3:32). **This reality, ...the possibility of knowing God personally and intimately..., is a key theme that occurs throughout the scriptures.** He walked with Adam and Eve in the garden. Abraham was called “the friend of God”. He spoke with Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. The prophets of the OT received personal communications from Him, as He revealed to them the messages they were to deliver to the people. Jesus' presence in this world was to reveal the grace and truth of God's heart, and to restore the possibility of reconciliation of sinners to the Holy God. The Spirit has come to dwell in each believer, so that we could be *personally* taught, led and empowered by Him. In the end, the culmination of salvation history, the *summum bonum* of human experience, is that “the dwelling of God is with people”. **Access to and intimacy with God is what it is all about!**

Paul was specifically praying about three things: That we might know (1.) What is the hope, or expectation, He has called us to, i.e., what is the mission or purpose of our calling as His followers; (2.) What is the rich-abundance of the magnificence of the allotted portion He has set aside for us; and (3.) What is the “above-and-beyond greatness of His power” that He has made available to us to accomplish His will. We have three things: the calling, the allotment (designated area of assignment, and resources), and the empowerment.

Again, it is important to remember that **these things are *not* obvious to us. They are things that we *must seek to know and perceive*. GOD *must reveal them to us*.** As we pursue *HIM*, and walk in pursuit of Him and His will, He will open our spiritual eyes and our minds to begin to see and perceive His will, His provision and His empowerment.

As intriguing as these three thoughts might be, **Paul raises the level of our expectation by giving us an important comparison. You see, we might be tempted to think only in human terms.** We might look at *ourselves*, what we might expect or hope from *ourselves*, ...what resources or “allotted portion” that we might currently possess, or could imagine that we could pull together, ...and what power or ability that we see *in ourselves*. **When we do that, ...when we think only in terms of ourselves, our vision, our hope, our expectation, our resources, or the reach of our own lives, or our own ability, we are missing the point of this entire passage.**

We are called *by God to His mission, ...His purpose* for our lives. *God Himself* has given us *His abundant resources and assigned us an area of service*. And, *He Himself* has designated the extraordinary-greatness of His power to enable us to do what He has called us to do. *God's mission; God's provision; and God's power*, NOT our own merely human vision, resources or ability. We are called to *partner-with GOD!*

What is that comparison that drives us to look *beyond* our own limitations? Paul says that “these things”, ...the calling, the allotment and the power..., are “according to the inworking of the might of HIS robust-power, which He inworked in the Christ, raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above every ruler and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to

come. .” **WOW!!** Paul wants us to envision the incredible power of God that was involved in raising Jesus from the dead, and seating HIM above all other authorities and powers, at the right hand of His Father, and understand that God is ready to act in *our lives* in a comparable fashion! **God wants us to expect and believe that He is ready to work in our lives in a way that can only be described as “God-sized”, ...unfathomable, limitless, boundless, unstoppable.**

Put yourself in that upper room, on that first Resurrection Day. Ten of the apostles were there (Thomas was absent – Jn. 20:24), and Cleopas and his unnamed friend had returned from Emmaus to report that they had seen the risen Christ. They were told that He had also appeared to Simon Peter. **Suddenly, Jesus Himself stood among them!** They were startled and afraid, thinking that it might be a spirit, but Jesus assured them that it was He Himself. **He encouraged them to come close, and to touch Him, so that they could see for themselves that He had flesh and bones, and was not a spirit, or a vision, or some ethereal appearance.** He showed them His hands and feet, revealing the marks of the nails that had affixed Him to the cross. He asked if they had anything to eat, and they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, which He ate while they watched. **It was really Jesus! They were filled with joy and amazement!**

As wonderful as this amazing reunion was, Jesus had a larger purpose for His coming. He wanted them to understand what had taken place, ...and He had an assignment for them. He told them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”⁴⁵ Then **He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,**⁴⁶ and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day...” (Luke 24:44-46). It was important that they understand that what had happened was all part of God’s plan to redeem humankind, and had been spoken of centuries before by the prophets. **Can you imagine being there to hear Jesus Himself break down and explain the things concerning Himself that had been written in the OT scriptures? THAT would have been amazing! They needed to clearly know and understand these truths, because He was going to give them a job to do, ...a calling that they would devote the remainder of their lives to pursue.**

What was that calling? “...that repentance unto a release of sins was to be proclaimed unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Lk. 24:47). They were to proclaim the message of forgiveness of sins, for those who would trust in Jesus and follow Him.

What was their “allotted portion”, their “field of work”, the “place” or “property” they were to advance to claim? All the nations of the world, ...beginning from Jerusalem.

By what power or ability would they be able to do this? How were they to accomplish this great endeavor? **“Behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high”** (Lk. 24:49). Jesus was going to send the Holy Spirit to empower them to fulfill their assignment.

Let’s look at another passage. Matthew 28:18-20: “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” **What was their calling? To make obedient disciples, active followers of Jesus, apprentices-in-training, participating-partners in Jesus’ kingdom work. What was their allotted portion, ...their “field of work”? All nations. By what power or ability could they do this? By the authority and power of Jesus, who would be with them “all the days”.**

This is very much a parallel to the call of Abram (Gen. 12), to go to a land that Yahweh would show him. God later told him that He had brought him from Ur of the Chaldeans to “give you this land to possess it” (15:7). **Abram’s calling? To follow Yahweh** where He would lead. **His “inheritance” or “allotted portion”? The land of Canaan. By what power** would this come to pass? **By the power of God,** “...I will give you this land.” **How about the example of Joshua? What was his calling? He was called to “bring the sons of Israel into the land,** which I swore to give to them” (Deut. 31:23). **He was also called to divide the land into portions for each of the tribes** of Israel (Josh. 13:1,7). How would he accomplish this? **What power would enable him to do this? God said, “I will be with you”** (Deut. 31:23).

There are important lessons to learn from these examples. Often, the calling of the Lord was initiated in one person’s life, but extended beyond their life into the lives of others. Also, the inheritance or “allotted portion” was designated by God, but was not fully possessed by the one following Him, at least not in their lifetime. They were like visionary pioneers, starting a process that reached far beyond their own lives. Their participation was a crucial beginning, or an important part of the process, but they may not have experienced the fullness of the promise. But, even while not in full possession, God provided means of support and resources along the way. **Finally, it was by the power of God that these things were initiated, carried out, and ultimately fulfilled.**

It was this way for the apostles, and for us, as well. **We are called to something much bigger than ourselves.** It spans multiple generations. God will give us what we need to accomplish His purpose. **The assignment of that Resurrection Day evening was the beginning of an expansive calling that involves many, many people, and spans centuries of work. Each of us has a part to play, ...a tangible place of influence and resources to work with, ...and the power of God is available to make it all come to pass.**