

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:1-16

I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship.
—*Louisa May Alcott*

Today, let's meditate on the first three verses of the reading from Ephesians: *I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

The apostle describes himself as a “prisoner in the Lord.” He was also a prisoner of imperial Rome. When he wrote this letter to the church at Ephesus (an ancient port city on the Aegean Sea), he was probably under house arrest and not in a prison cell. His movements were restricted and monitored at all times. He could not travel. He could not have many visitors or dinner parties.

In other words, his life was like ours! So, like us, he had time to write. Today's reading offers some good advice.

No one likes to think of their home or the place where they live as a prison. Yet many people have been confined to their homes or rooms in a rest home for many months now. Perhaps its been more than a year since you've seen grandchildren or other close family members.

It's tough. And when we go through hard times, it's easy to get grumpy and impatient. We begin to think as children think — that we are the center of the universe. It is easy to forget that, like us, others are suffering, too.

The Bible tells us in this reading that we should live “worthy” of our calling. To do this requires “humility and gentleness,” “patience,” putting up with others “in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Sometimes you might feel like you're in a prison, that you're trapped, that this COVID-19 thing is a huge inconvenience.

It is. But this virus also gives us an opportunity to be the love of Christ to others. If we cannot do this now, then when?

I hope that by now, August 1, 2021, the virus is slowing down, that doors are opening up and that you and your friends have been vaccinated to reduce the possibility of contracting the infection.

But whatever the situation, the apostle Paul's advice still applies: Let us be humble and gracious, patient and relaxed, striving always to keep the peace in the spirit of Christ!

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Help me this week, Lord Jesus, to see others as you see them. Amen.

*Blessings,
Lionel & Pastor Ben Metz*

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Acts 13-14

Monday: 2 Kings 22-25

Tuesday: Obadiah

Wednesday: Jeremiah 1-2

Thursday: Jeremiah 3-5

Friday: Jeremiah 6-8

Saturday: Psalms 82-84

Verse to Remember

How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD.

—Psalm 84:1-2

NAMES AND PLACES

Draw lines to connect the biblical figures with the locations that are often associated with them.

Abraham	Moab
Amos	Canaan
Ananias	Babylon
Cornelius	Caesarea
Daniel	Nineveh
Dorcas	Jericho
Esther	Ur
Jesus	Tarsus
Jonah	Joppa
Joshua	Aram
Lydia	Tekoa
Martha	Bethany
Moses	Egypt
Naaman	Philippi
Ruth	Nazareth
Saul	Persia
Zacchaeus	Damascus

August 2021

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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

TIME ON YOUR HANDS?

The top 10 things to do!

Got some spare time on your hands, and don't know what to do next? Here are some ideas:

1. Write a 50-word poem.
2. Find 10 things that start with the letter P.
3. Write a letter.
4. Make a list of the three top things for which you are grateful.
5. Memorize one Bible verse.
6. Read the Bible passage for the current days found in the upper left hand corner of this page.
7. Color a picture, or draw a picture.
8. Look up a word you don't understand in the dictionary.
9. Think of someone to whom you'd like to be especially kind today.
10. Write a letter to God.

Answers:

Abraham-Ur;
 Amos-Tekoa;
 Ananias-Damascus;
 Cornelius-Caesarea;
 Daniel-Babylon;
 Dorcas-Joppa;
 Esther-Persia;
 Jesus-Nazareth;
 Jonah-Nineveh;
 Joshua-Canaan;
 Lydia-Philippi;
 Martha-Bethany;
 Moses-Egypt;
 Naaman-Aram;
 Ruth-Moab;
 Saul-Tarsus;
 Zacchaeus-Jericho.

