

# Graham Young's Ordination

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Date: 20 January 2022

- [ 0 : 00 ] All right. Thank you, Brother Trent. Certainly glad to be here this evening. Graham, I appreciate you so very much that you want to be a part of your ordination service.
- I know that you know that I love you. Me and Rhonda love you dearly. Baptist Tabernacle Church loves you and Olivia. And we're proud of you. And I also know you well enough that you don't really like all this attention being brought to you.
- I know that. And I've been given the responsibility to share a charge to you for the gospel ministry, a part of.
- I just have one half of it here this evening. And if you have your Bibles, I thought about what to say. There's so many things a pastor could say.
- And I thought about what to say because I knew that there would be others to be sharing as well. And I came across Ephesians chapter 3. We're going to read the first 13 verses of Ephesians chapter 3.
- [ 1 : 05 ] And I'm going to pull out of these verses three things that I want to share with you from my heart, Graham. But we need to get a little bit of context.
- And so we'll look at that first. For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you, word, had that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words, whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.
- He was elaborating on some of the things that he had mentioned in chapter 1 and especially beginning in verse 11 in chapter 2. And he's now elaborating on them to make sure that they would understand it.
- And that's what pastors are to do. That's what ministers are to do. Exactly that. Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.
- Wherefore I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. unto me, whom less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach, that I should, here I missed it up here.
- [ 2 : 47 ] That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers and heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by faith of him.
- Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulation for you, which is for your glory. Let us pray. Father, I pray for the next few moments that you would guide our thoughts and my words, and may I share your truth clearly for your honor and your glory and for Graham's good.
- It is my prayer in Jesus' name. Amen. There are several truths found in Ephesians chapter 3 that I would like to bring to your attention this evening, Graham, that as I'm a part of that charge tonight, I'd like to give a little bit of context.

The beginning of this chapter, Paul expounds on the mystery of Christ that he writes about in the last half, in particular beginning at verse 11 to the end of chapter 2. And that's the mystery that is clarified in verse 6 of chapter 3, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

This was new. This was new that the Gentiles would be a part of the church, the union of Jewish and Gentile believers in the church together. So in this context, we're elaborating to the Ephesians, the truth that in Christ, Jews and Gentiles become one in God's sight and his family.

[ 4 : 40 ] We find several important truths that I believe that are essential to know for one who's been called to preach the gospel as exemplified by the life of the Apostle Paul.

And I want to share three of those with you tonight. First, I would like to see this. Paul understood clearly that he was responsible to be a steward of the Word of God.

There in verse 2. If you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you, he reminds Ephesians that this dispensation, the grace of God was given to him for their benefit.

And the word translated dispensation means stewardship, the management of a household or a task or work responsibility. In other words, he's talking about the stewardship in context of the grace of God or the gospel or the word of God.

You have been called, Graham, to be a good steward of the Word of God. And of course, we know from 1 Corinthians chapter 4 that it's required of the steward to be found faithful.

[ 5 : 48 ] And you've been given the responsibility to faithfully handle God's Word. I'm going to tell you, that's an awesome responsibility. And every pastor understands that who's true to the Word.

We don't want to get up here and just share a bunch of opinions. We want to get up here and share, thus saith the Lord, and try to make it in a clear way that people understand it. And I'm going to tell you something, when someone takes a passage, a hard passage, and they make it easy to understand a pastor or preacher or an evangelist, they've done a lot of hard work.

And you've been given that responsibility to faithfully handle His Word. We're not to twist it. We're not to bend it. We're to be good stewards of it.

We're to rightly divide it. And that word there is a sowing term, that dividing, that a seamstress would use with a pattern. They would put those two patterns together and sew together so it came out to be what it was supposed to be.

And that's how we are to do with the Word of God. Rightly divide it, put it together, make it where it makes a sense, it gives a sense of the meaning. And properly interpret it. I remember reading a question years ago now.

[ 6 : 56 ] This question was this. Who speaks for God? And the answer was, God speaks for God.

He has already spoken. He inspired men now to write it. And that which has been written has been preserved for us today. We are only as pastors and preachers of the gospel is the conduit to convey the message that he has already given.

And someday, and I feel a little queasy about it, but someday Mike Gray is going to have to give an account of what he has said behind these kind of pulpits throughout his whole ministry.

We're to convey that message. Preach the Word in season and out of season. When it's popular and when it's not. And then, Paul goes on to say in Ephesians chapter 4, how we're supposed to do it.

Sometimes we get carried away and we can really be jerks about preaching the gospel sometimes. Did you know that? Ephesians 4.15 tells us that we're to share the truth in love.

[ 8 : 09 ] So the first thing I wanted to share with you in this charge is you've been given the responsibility of a steward of God's Word, Graham. And I know you'll take that seriously. I know you're taking it seriously right now.

I'm just reminding you in this charge. Second thing I want you to see in this passage is how the Apostle Paul identified himself. And is it interesting to you that he says there at the beginning of chapter 3, for this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ?

Number two, Paul identified himself as a prisoner of Jesus Christ in verse 1, made a minister in verse 7. You know, he didn't say, I thought he was a prisoner of Rome. I thought he was a prisoner of Caesar.

He didn't say that. Although he appealed to Caesar, he did not consider himself Caesar's prisoner. He said that he was a prisoner of Jesus Christ. You know why?

Because he knew that he was exactly where God wanted him to be. And he knew what he had to do, and he did it. In other words, he was there because God allowed it so.

[ 9 : 15 ] He was a minister of Jesus Christ, bought with a price, and given the special mission of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. And I'm reminded of what Paul wrote to 1 Corinthians chapter 6, verses 19 and 20.

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Do you know that's not just for preachers? Did you know that? We're not our own. Verse 20, For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

See, the Greek word for bought is translated three times in the King James as redeemed. This is the same word used when someone purchases a slave from the marketplace during those times.

You see, when a slave was purchased, they were not bought to be set free. They were bought to do the service of the master's bidding. When we get saved, well, listen, we're not saved to do anything we want to do.

[ 10 : 24 ] We come to know Christ. We give Him our hearts and our life and we make Him our Lord, our master. And we're to follow His bidding.

And Graham, God has called you to be an evangelist. As He kind of opens, describes those offices over there in Ephesians chapter 4, apostles and prophets.

Those have gone away now. Those were during the apostolic age. But then he notices two other evangelists, church planters, church planters, missionaries, and then pastors, teachers.

The same is true for you and me.

We're to do His bidding. The rest of verse 7 is very important because it tells us how we're to accomplish the ministry. According to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by those two words, effectual working of His power.

[ 11 : 28 ] The phrase effectual working speaks of God's supernatural power. And I think of what the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

In other words, the ministry that God has called you to do, He'll give you the strength to accomplish it. Feel trusting for the strength. Because you need that divine power, strength, to do the work of the ministry.

Now you heard, there in our little meeting, you heard how from pastors that the ministry can sometimes be difficult. And it will be. That's why you'll need to do and have God's strength to help you.

You know that God will, let me put it this way, I'll put it personal. God let me try to do the ministry all by myself if I wanted to. Every time. God will step back, okay Mike, you don't want my help.

If you think you've got these bright ideas and you've not come to me and prayed about it and you just want to do it, go ahead. You know what I found out? It didn't take very long how desperately I need the power of God on my life in my ministry.

[ 12 : 38 ] Paul identified himself a prisoner of Christ, meaning that whatever he did and wherever he went were under Christ's control. I like what your father-in-law said.

Kind of made reference to that. In that meeting, you realize that without God's consent, he was not subject to the plans or the power or the punishment or the imprisonment of any man or government.

Perspective is so important. Actually, it's all important. How we view and react to circumstances is more important than the circumstances themselves.

And that's what Paul was meaning when he said, I'm the prisoner of Jesus Christ. Paul's perspective was a divine perspective. And he lived with total trust in God's purposes.

Joseph is a great biblical example of this. We don't have time to go into that. Paul knew that his circumstances had turned out for the greater good of the gospel.

[ 13 : 55 ] Paul knew that he was in the ministry because he had been called by God to minister. He was not in it for his own purposes and he did not try to carry it out in his own power.

He made the supreme sacrifice of unselfish service for the sake of bringing others to salvation. realize that you've been made a minister and that you're a prisoner of Jesus Christ and you're not your own.

I don't think you have this problem at all, but you may in the future. Pride is something that we all deal with. It's just that some people deal with it more than others.

Paul ministered with a genuine sense of humility. Verse 8. Notice what he says about himself. Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The apostle Paul considered himself not the least of the apostles, but the least of the saints. I can't tell you how important it is to have a proper sense of pride.

[ 15 : 13 ] We're just, listen, we who have been called into the ministry and the God, we're just a sinner saved by grace. We're nothing special. God called us as a blessed privilege and as we trust God and as we get into his word and as we pray and he empowers us, he does his work through us and to God be the glory.

We're not to do it for our own prestige, for our own power, for our own influence, others, so others can pat us on the back. We do it for the cause of Christ.

We're to be faithful in the work and God, listen, God does the saving. You and I can't save anybody. If the Holy Spirit has to be there to draw them, but we are there to present.

God does the saving. One of the things in Ecclesiastes, the list that God hates, one of the things out there is what a proud look.

We are what we are by the grace of God and when I was reading last week in El Paso, Texas, Proverbs in the morning, chapter 11, I came across verse 2 and I thought I'd throw this in or add this to this message.

[ 16 : 24 ] When pride cometh, then cometh shame, but with the lowly is wisdom. I remind you of James 4, 6.

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he said, God resisteth the proud. I don't know about you, but I need all the grace I can get.

Sustaining grace, helping grace, I can get. And if I act out of my pride, and I have, so I don't want to get up here and thank you that I have, and I have. It's ugly.

It's sinful. And when I'm like that, guess what? God's resists his grace to give to me. It was my choice.

I want God's sustaining grace, helpful grace in this ministry. I appreciate the fact that you have the humble spirit and I want you to always to keep it, Graham.

[ 17 : 27 ] Because James 4, 10 says this, humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he'll lift you up. You know what? If God feels that you need to be lifted up, he'll do it.

Don't try to help him. Thank you. It doesn't work. It just gets worse. You see, some of that humility, when I talk about humility, I'm not talking about you're a doormat.

You understand that. I mean, Paul was a courageous man. But to call himself a prisoner of Jesus Christ and accept his circumstances with the right spirit, that's humility.

To stand up and continue to carry on with all the things that he went through, being stoned and left for dead, me, I would have went home probably. I mean, I'm going home after that. Feeling, and say, I think I feel led of the Lord to do it.

Blame it on God, right? How many times do we blame things on God? Well, God's leading me here or that whatever. I just got stoned. I feel like I need to go home now.

[ 18 : 38 ] Because God's leading me home. No. Paul didn't do that. He continued to do what he knew God wanted him to do. That's humility. He, and every believer is a steward of his calling, spiritual gifts, opportunities, skills, knowledge, and every other blessing that's come from the Lord.

I want you to understand this. If you don't remember anything, I want you to remember this one, okay? This is sub-point. I love you dearly, Graham. I just want you to know that. Paul did not get his zeal for the gospel, his passion for souls from high emotional experiences.

Though he may have had many of them, his love and his passion, his energetic zeal to win the loss and to build up the saved came from the great insights into the gospel and his word.

The more he comprehended God's love and his grace, the more he was compelled to share and exemplify the love of that grace. Paul was so zealous with dispensing the truth of God's word that he sanctifies his health and his freedom and his very life in ministering of imparting the truth so others could hear and understand.

And for him, such sacrifice was a joy. Rejoice always in the Lord. And again, I say rejoice, Paul said, while sitting in a Roman cell.

[ 20 : 30 ] The gospel is spread by men whom God called to proclaim it. And it is the gospel of which Paul was made a minister in that. And Graham, you have been called by God.

You didn't ask for it. God burdened you and you said yes. I'm starting to close now. I read this while preparing and I'd like for you to hear it and I just want you to think about it.

See what you think. Among the greatest dangers to the ministry, to all faithful Christians living, are things that in the world's eyes are of supreme value.

Personal ambition, prestige, recognition, honor, reputation, and success. God not only chooses weak and foolish people to save, 1 Corinthians 1 verses 26-29, but weak and foolish preachers to whom to save them.

2 Corinthians 11-30 chapter 12 verses 7-10. And the writer went on to say this, for those not willing to pay that price, their seeking the position is illegitimate.

[ 21 : 48 ] There's something to think about. Paul was, Paul was, did not choose to be an apostle. He was appointed.

I want you to notice his passion in, he wrote, 1 Corinthians 9-16 following, for though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.

For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward. But if against my will a dispensation, there's that word against, same Greek word, a stewardship, but the gospel is committed unto me.

Paul saw himself as a prisoner who was called to be a minister with a responsibility to be a steward of the grace of God, causing others to understand its truth depending on God's giftedness and empowerment to accomplish his called task for his glory.

How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? Paul asked in Romans. And how shall they believe in him in whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

[ 23 : 11 ] And how shall they preach except they be sent? As is written, Graham, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things.

And I save this last verse because one of the first things that came to my mind when I began to think about what to do, Malachi 6, 8. He has showed the old man what is good.

And what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk calmly before thy God.

God bless you, Graham. Problem with that. That's stillen c