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EPHESIANS

4:1-8 ONE



Here are some amazing facts about the number 1:

I: The Ancient Greeks thought 1 was not a number at all, because there was only of them/it!

II: The number one is not considered to be a prime number, because it can't be divided by any whole number other than itself.

III: One is the only number which, when written in English, is in reverse alphabetical order!

In Ephesians 4, Paul begins by telling us he is in prison. Because he would go to that extent, he urges us to follow him by living a life worthy of our calling. He goes on to give us a whole list of 'ones' (at least in the English translation we most often use).

I number 1 is *One Another*: Bear with one another in love. Some of us are a bit cooped up at the moment... some people in the village are getting a bit grumpy on social media. We are one body – that's why we are humble and gentle, patient and bear with one another. If one bit of our body went wrong the rest of our body wouldn't pick on it, or exclude it etc – we bear with one another because we are one body.

I number 2 is *One Body*. We are gathering together online as one body, one church. We are one body because we are the body of Christ, we are one body because we have one Spirit. Recently we have reminded ourselves that the Holy Spirit we have

is the same one who raised Christ from the dead. No-one has a better or different Holy Spirit from you. He is *there*. Because we have one Spirit, we are one even though we cannot be together, and we have hope.

I number 3 is *One Hope*. We have one hope – we are followers of Jesus, and *whatever* happens to us in the weeks to come we have eternity to look forward to, we are a people of hope, our currency is hope. If you don't know this hope, follow Jesus today! He is God's hope for eternity for us as we follow him.

Because Jesus is (number 4) the *one Lord*. We were praying the other day, and someone reminded us that Coronavirus is not Lord. Jesus is Lord. We have hope because Jesus is Lord.

5, we have *one faith*. It is so good to hear of so many churches joining together in prayer and in lots of ways, recognising that we have one faith. We have one faith in Jesus Christ who died for us, rose for us, lives amongst us, who is with us, and has not abandoned us. Christ promises that whatever comes we will be forever with him.

I number 6: We have *one baptism*. Sometimes I ask people if they have been baptised and they say, well I was christened. You have, then! Sometimes people say they were baptised in the Catholic church, or immersed as an adult or whatever. So have you! They all count the same, because we are baptised into Jesus. We go down into his death, we come up in his resurrection. We are baptised into God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is an outward sign of what God has done in our hearts. Again, he can do that in our hearts today.

If we are baptised in Jesus' name, we have (number 7!) *one God who is Father* of all. If we have one Father, we are a family. We are a big and slightly complicated family, but we are the big family of God. We talked last week about how we can come to our Father, pray to our Father, always be with our Father. Some of us are learning the delights of *always* being with our earthly Father this week. For my children that is a mixed experience! But to be in the presence of our Father God, to sit and be with him, is only ever good.

And because God is our Father, and he always gives good gifts to his children, he gives grace to each one of us. God has not passed any of you by. If you believe in Jesus he won't. But as he gives grace to each of us, it is a gift to do something with. So what is he calling you to do today?

Looking at the reading, – what does it mean to you today to live a life worthy of the calling you have received?

Which of these words challenges you most today? Humble, gentle, patient, love, unity, peace.

Use the image of baptism to picture yourself being with Jesus in his death, and now in his resurrection. Get in touch if you'd like to be baptised as soon as we can meet together again.