

#values
Equipped to Serve

Introduction

I. Our spiritual condition apart from Christ

Ephesians 2:1-3 (NLT) ¹Once you were dead, doomed forever because of your many sins. ²You used to live just like the rest of the world, full of sin, obeying Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refused to obey God. ³All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature. We were born with an evil nature, and we were under God's anger just like everyone else.

II. Through Christ our spiritual condition is transformed.

Ephesians 2:4-5a (NLT) ⁴But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so very much, ⁵that even while we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead.

Ephesians 2:5b-8 (NLT) ^{5b}(It is only by God's special favor that you have been saved!) ⁶For he raised us from the dead along with Christ, and we are seated with him in the heavenly realms - all because we are one with Christ Jesus. ⁷And so God can always point to us as examples of the incredible wealth of his favor and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us through Christ Jesus. ⁸God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.

Ephesians 2:9-10 (NLT) ⁹Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. ¹⁰For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLT) ¹¹He is the one who gave these gifts to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹²Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

III. A foundational value that we have as a Vineyard church is that each one of us is equipped to serve.

A. Four common excuses we use for not getting in the game and doing Kingdom ministry.

1. I feel like I have little or nothing to offer.

1 Peter 4:10 (NIV) *Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.*

2. I'm sure others can do it better than me.
3. I'm sure I'm not needed since every ministry area looks well-staffed and taken care of.

Matthew 9:37 (NIV) When he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."

4. I'm too young or too old to do ministry.

IV. My personal testimony of being equipped to serve

Conclusion

Exodus 4:2 (NIV) When the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied.