

Running the Race Well

Ephesians 3:1-21



February 1, 2026

Context: The Letter to Ephesians

- Written by Paul (AD 60–64) to the church in Ephesus.
- Ephesus: major city of trade & pagan worship (Temple of Artemis).
- Church made up of Jews & Gentiles.
- Themes: Unity & Spiritual Growth.
- Paul reminds believers to live out their new identity in Christ.

Ephesians 3:1-3 (NKJV)

**For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus
for you Gentiles— ² if indeed you have heard of
the dispensation (administration) of the grace of
God which was given to me for you, ³ how that by
revelation He made known to me the mystery**

Ephesians 3:3-5 (NKJV)

(as I have briefly written already, ⁴ by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), ⁵ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

Ephesians 3:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, ⁷ of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

- ³ **how that by revelation He (God) made known to me the mystery**
- **mystery** means “A divine plan that was hidden but is now revealed by God”
- Gentiles are now **fellow heirs** with Israel,
- members of the **same body**,
- **partakers in the same promise in Christ (v6).**

Ephesians 3:8 (NKJV)

⁸ To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

- **unsearchable riches of Christ**
- **the boundless riches of Christ**
- “the wealth of who Christ is and what He has done that can never be fully explored, measured, or exhausted. It includes: His grace; His mercy; His wisdom; His love; His power; Our inheritance in Him.”

Ephesians 3:9 (NKJV)

**⁹ and to make all see
what *is* the fellowship of the mystery,
which from the beginning of the ages
has been hidden in God who created
all things through Jesus Christ;**

- What is **(v.9) the fellowship of the mystery?**
- new revelation of God “making one new family in Christ, with a shared inheritance, shared Spirit, shared identity as one body, and shared access to the Father.”

Ephesians 3:10-11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, ¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

- **manifold wisdom**
- “many, richly diverse intricate”
- multi-faceted, richly layered
brilliance of God’s redemptive plan,
now put on display through the
united people of Christ

Ephesians 3:12 (NKJV)

¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

- **boldness** is the “freedom to speak openly, with no intimidation”
- **access** is used for someone “gaining admission to someone important”
- **confidence** is “trust, full assurance”
- “directly into God’s presence with freedom, security, and full assurance, not because of our performance, but through faith in Him”
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Ephesians 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Ephesians 3:14-16 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory,

Ephesians 3:16-18 (NKJV)

**to be strengthened with might through
His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that
Christ may dwell in your hearts
through faith; that you, being rooted
and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to
comprehend with all the
saints what *is* the width and length and
depth and height**

Ephesians 3:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

- **be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man –**
- to “be made strong, empowered, given inward fortitude, divine enablement, in your heart, will, and spirit.”

- **Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**
- “take up permanent residence, feel at home at the control center of one’s life (thoughts, desires, decisions) through faith.”

- **being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend... to know the love of Christ,**
- which speaks to a settled, ongoing condition, a deep-rooted nourishment, stability, a firm foundation of God's love.

Paul prays...believers

- would be Spirit-empowered at their core,
- Christ-occupied at their center,
- love-rooted in their foundation,
- experience the limitless love of Jesus.

Ephesians 3:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

- **Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think**, meaning this is God's ability to work beyond our imagination.
- **according to the power that works in us**, meaning God's power is already active in the life of a believer.

- to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus, to all generations, forever and ever, meaning this is God's work (plan and testimony) through the church, not a perfect people, but a redeemed people through out every generation of people.

- God's plan is bigger than we think and it includes you and me.... His plan in me is my race.
- The church is a living display of God's wisdom (redemption plan) in all those running the race.
- Spiritual strength for the race comes from the inside.
- Christ's love is the foundation and the goal of our race.

- Ephesians 3 shows us that ...
- God's eternal, multi-layered rescue plan is now revealed in Christ,
- displayed through the united church,
- rooted in Christ's limitless love, and
- empowered by God's strength working within us.