

## **Ephesians 3 A Multi-faceted Mystery: In Defense of the Church**

From Chapter 2

### **We belong to God's family.**

Vs 1-3: For whom and to whom

A prisoner of the Lord and missionary to the Gentiles

Vs 3-9 The "mystery" of the New Family of God

The Mystery: The Gentiles share in the privilege of knowing Jesus.

- Fellow citizens (2:19)
- Fellow members of God's family (2:19)
- Fellow heirs with Jews
- Fellow members of the body
- Fellow partners (sharers) of the promise

This *new community* that God was building through Christ was *radically new*. It required *new everything* — complete metanoia!

Vs 7-13 Paul explains his calling.

Vs 8 He is being used by God to teach the church through God's grace and he gives himself a nickname: "The Leaster" or "The Leastest" or "The Lesser Least"

Vs 10 Why does the Church exist? To make God's multi-faceted wisdom known everywhere to everyone in every way.

### **Questions:**

How often do you think about and pray for Second Mile?

What is your posture towards community life? How does your group add new people? How did you engage with the book groups?

Paul was committed to and full of love for the New Family God was building. What about you? Do you love the local church and universal Church? How do you pray for and seek peace in the body of Christ?

In what ways do you practice being a coheir, member, and partner with others in Second Mile?

Vs 14-19 Overcome with prayer in his mind, heart, and body  
Overwhelming care and emotion for this New Family

- **To be strengthened with power in your inner beings.**
- **That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.**

This parallelism strongly emphasizes our need:

- God's continual presence in us.
- A continued relationship in which God *changes* us, which in turn *strengthens* us.
- Our identity in him. We belong to him.
- He is the source of our strength.

- **To be rooted and established in love**

Cultivated, rooted, and built on love

- **To comprehend (to grasp NIV) Christ's love *with all the saints***

God's love cannot be fully grasped in isolation from other members of the body of Christ.

"The isolated Christian can indeed know something of the love of Jesus. But his grasp of it is bound to be limited by his limited experience. It needs the whole people of God to understand the whole love of God, all the saints together, Jews and Gentiles, men and women, young and old, black and white, with all their varied backgrounds and experiences." - John Stott

- **To be filled with all God's fullness**

- Fullness of his lavish grace (1:6)
- Fullness of his calling, glorious inheritance and immeasurably great power (1:18-19)
- Fullness of his mercy (2:4)
- Fullness of Christ making us alive (2:5)
- Fullness of his rich grace and kindness (2:7)
- Fullness of his creation (2:10)
- Fullness of his nearness because of the blood Christ shed on the cross (2:13,16)
- Fullness of his indwelling (2:22)
- Fullness of his multi-faceted wisdom (3:10)
- Fullness of his power and love (3:16,18)
- Fullness of his oneness (4:4-5)
- Fullness of Christ's stature (4:13)
- Fullness of his light (5:8-9)
- Fullness of his Spirit (5:18)
- Fullness of his vast strength (6:10)

*"I made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love you have loved me with may be in them and I may be in them."* John 17:26

*I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.* Philippians 1:6

**Question:**

Is this the standard of your prayer for yourself and for our church?

"The infinite ability of God to work beyond our prayers, thoughts and dreams is by the power at work within us, within us individually (Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith) and within us as a people (who are the dwelling place of God by his Spirit). It is the power of the resurrection, the power which raised Christ from the dead, enthroned him in the heavenlies, and then raised and enthroned us there with him. That is the power which is at work within the Christian and the Church." - John Stott

Pray for Second Mile as a whole and as individuals who are part of the whole.

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- **That Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith.**
- **To be rooted and established in love**
- **To comprehend (to grasp NIV) Christ's love *with all the saints***
- **To be filled with all God's fullness**