

# Ephesians 3

Truth Annihilates Deception

- **Ch. 1** Spiritual Blessing **In Christ**: Chosen, Adopted, Redeemed, Forgiven, Predestined, Sealed
- **Ch. 2** Result of Blessings: Made alive, Saved by Grace, Made One family...

**Ephesians 2:22b...being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.**

We were Once dead but now One with God  
A Return to the Garden Relationship

## I. Mystery Revealed One Body/One Family

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

- **Dispensation:** Implemented Strategy

IOWs Since God has *strategically dispensed* His grace to me  
I'm compelled to share His grace with others

- **To Preach** what God has given me...

1. **Mystery:** Church. Jew/Gentile/Black/White/NJ/WA One Body. Body of Christ
2. **Grace:** Unmerited Kindness of God sending His son to die/Make us one by His blood
3. **Revelation:** Given by Spirit to Paul/Apostles and Prophets of Paul's day for us...

That God has opened up a door to those w/out God/w/out Hope  
Paul: By God's grace I am going to help them find that door/To preach...

6 ...that the Gentiles should be **fellow heirs**, of the **same body**, and partakers of [God's] promise in Christ through the gospel...

- **Message:** Gentiles would be...

1. Fellow Heirs of the **same God**
2. Of the **same body** as believing Jews
3. Partakers of the **same promise** of a Savior

Through the Preaching of the Gospel of Grace. Only saving Gospel...

**Galatians 1:6** I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the **grace of Christ**, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert [lit. distort] the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, **let him be**

**accursed.** 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

I am called to make known the Mystery [Christ in us] by preaching the Gospel of Grace...

**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.**

- **Gift of Grace:** Power unto Salvation/Power for Ministry
- **Power:** gr. *en-erg'-i-ah* Lit. Superhuman power of Grace to change lives/ours/others

Paul knew the Power of God's Grace at Salvation

**Acts 26: 9** [Paul Testified to King Agrippa] ... I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. 12 "While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13 at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. 14 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15 So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17 I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 18 **to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.**'

- Paul's intended victim becomes Paul's brother in Christ...

**Acts 9:13** [Jesus to Ananias: Go talk Saul] ...Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." <sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a **chosen vessel** of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. <sup>16</sup> For **I will show him how many things he must suffer** for My name's sake." <sup>17</sup> And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "**Brother Saul**, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." <sup>18</sup> Immediately there fell from his eyes *something* like scales, and **he received his sight** at once; and he arose and was baptized.

Peter's Revelation

- Vision of unclean animals in sheet down from Heaven
- Command 3x to eat/accept what was once unclean. Peter: *Not so...Lord?*
- Peter called to go to Gentile Cornelius/Share the Gospel of Grace at his home...

**Acts 10:44** While Peter was still speaking these words, **the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.** 45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

**Acts 11:15** [Peter's explanation to doubters] ...as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" 18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

Mystery Hidden now Revealed. One Body In Christ  
One God. One Savior. One Body

**Isaiah 42:6** I, the Lord, have **called You** in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will **keep You** and **give You** as a covenant to the people, As a **light to the Gentiles...**

**Acts 1:8** ...you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and **Samaria, and to the end of the earth.**

Paul knew the power of God's **Grace in Salvation**  
Paul knew the power of God's **Grace in Ministry**

The Effective Working of God's Power Displayed in Preaching  
Yet Paul asked for prayers for boldness...

**Romans 15:16** [Paul's desire] ...that I might be a **minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles**, ministering the gospel of God...

**Colossians 4:3** ..[Pray] for us, that God would **open to us a door for the word**, to speak the **mystery of Christ**, for which I am also in chains...

Paul did not consider himself worthy to preach...

## **II. Mystery Preached** Grace Received/Given/Displayed

8 To me, who am **less than the least of all the saints**, this **grace was given...**

Paul did not consider himself worthy to preach...  
Least of the Apostles/Least of the Saints

**1 Corinthians 15:9** For I am the **least of the apostles**, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But **by the grace of God I am what I am**, and His grace toward me was not in vain...

**2 Corinthians 12:9** [Jesus to Paul after saying no] **"My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.**

By the Grace of God I am what I am  
Effective Working of God's Power though Grace at Salvation/in Ministry

**8b...** [Grace has been given to me for a purpose] ...that I should preach among the Gentiles the **unsearchable** riches of Christ, 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** [always His plan] who created all things through Jesus Christ...

I Preach to those w/out God/W/out Hope  
Unsearchable Riches In Christ

Paul tried to figure out the greatness of God's grace, and started tracking it out as one might track out the shore of a lake. He soon discovered that it wasn't a lake at all, but an ocean, an immeasurable sea. God's riches are unsearchable; we will never know them completely. [Guzik]

**Ch. 1 Spiritual Blessings:** Chosen, Adopted, Redeemed, Forgiven, Predestined, Sealed

**Ch. 2 Result of Blessings:** Made Alive, Saved by Grace, One w/God by His Spirit in us.

Paul wants tell all...

- **Make Known:** Unsearchable Riches of Christ available to all
- **Make All See:** Communion/Beauty available In Christ...

Paul preached the mystery hidden in God from the before creation; i.e. not only will God save the Gentiles. Not only will He save all who trust in Jesus. Not only will He establish the church as His body, but God will dwell in those who are In Christ. IOWs We can be as pre-sin Adam and Eve walking with God in perfect fellowship even in the midst of a crooked and perverse world they did not have to deal with. [NJC]

Paul's Mission: All men might be as he is...  
To realize practically all that is available to us In Christ by Grace...

**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...

Since Christ dwells In Us/We In Christ...We are expected to Display Christ  
To display God's wisdom in choosing us to Principalities/Powers/Angels/Demons

**Ephesians 1:11b** ...according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to **the praise of His glory.**

**Colossians 2:15** [Jesus] ...disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. [And we His body should continue in that victory]

God doesn't use the angels to reveal His wisdom to the saints, but **He does use the saints to reveal His wisdom to the angelic beings**, both faithful and fallen angels. [Guzik]

- Angels are watching/looking/wondering...

**1 Peter 1:12** [OT Prophets] ...were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—

**things which angels desire to look into.** [What things? God's Amazing Grace to us the church. Angels learn of God's grace]

The history of the church becomes a graduate school for angels. [Mackay]

- **Manifold:** Using one thing for many purposes. Lit. marked with a great variety of colors. IOWs many colored

God makes His Eternal Purpose known to Angels/Demons through us in manifold ways...

- **Manifold Works:** All things working together for good to conform us to Christ
- **Manifold Grace:** Unmerited favor to the undeserving, Death blow to pride
- **Manifold Wisdom:** Proven out by her children, that...

God's Eternal Purpose was accomplished by Jesus on the Cross  
To bring those w/out hope/W/out God to God by the Blood of Christ

**Ephesians 1:10** ...that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one [sum up/resolve] all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

- God's Eternal Purpose was accomplished in Jesus: Make us one in Jesus...

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

- **Faith in Jesus** gives us Boldness/Access/Confidence to come to God

**Hebrews 4:16** Let us therefore **come boldly** to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**Hebrews 10:19** [Have...] **boldness** to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus

We have unlimited access to God through Jesus. He wants us to use it!  
We'll need boldness/access and confidence as sojourners in this world...

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

**John 16:33** These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world **you will have tribulation;** but be of good cheer, **I have overcome the world.**

- **Ephesians:** I am in jail for your sake. You are worth it

**1 Corinthians 11:1** **Imitate me,** just as I also imitate Christ.

Even in prison I am displaying the vertical life to all principalities/powers

**III. Mystery Appreciated** Whole Family of God

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**, to be **strengthened with might** through His Spirit in the inner man

- Knowing you are bearing fruit. Knowing my suffering is not in vain
- Knowing in His manifold wisdom God allowed my suffering for His Eternal Purpose...

I Bow my Knee to the Father of all who are In Christ. Father of our whole Family  
Those here/heaven/Those who now believe/Those who will believe

- **Riches of God's Glory given by His Grace:** God's Riches At Christ's Expense...

1. **Forgives** us by the riches of His glory Eph 1:7
2. **Adopts** us by the riches of His glory Eph 1:18
3. **Strengthens** us by the riches of His glory Eph 3:16

Strengthened with might through His Spirit in our inner man

**Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through **Christ who strengthens me.**

**Colossians 1:11** [Be]...strengthened with **all might**, according to His **glorious power**, for all patience and longsuffering with joy...

I pray by God's Spirit your inner man is strengthened with might and...

17 ...that **Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**; that you, being **rooted and grounded in love**

I pray Jesus dwells in your hearts by faith  
And you continue to grow and to stand

- **Rooted:** Roots down deep. Tree near water of life. Unwavering. Solid.
- **Grounded:** A house fully settled. Immovable. Solid

I pray you continue to grow and to stand and...

18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height

I pray you have a hunger/thirst to comprehend how much God loves you

- **Comprehend w/all the saints:** United in Love/Knit together in love.
  - Talking points over coffee...
1. God's love is **Wide** Like a river covering our sin
  2. God's love is **Long** Eternal. From before creation to never ending
  3. God's love is **Deep** Jesus condescending to die for us/ dwell within us
  4. God's love is **High** Seated w/Christ in Heavenlies walking above this world

I pray you have a hunger to comprehend how much God loves you and...

## 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.

A Love that is Immutable  
A love that nothing/No one can change

**Romans 8:38** ... I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us** from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I pray you know the love of Christ which surpasses all earthly knowledge  
I pray that you may know what cannot be known by ordinary means...

IOWs God's love is always present, consistent and immutable but only experienced supernaturally by nurturing our relationship with Jesus through time, prayer, humility, loving others, yielding to His Spirit and generally walking in obedience. [NJC]

## 19b... [I pray...] that you may **be filled with all the fullness of God.**

Among all the great sayings in this prayer, this is the greatest. To be FILLED with God is a great thing; to be filled with the FULLNESS of God is still greater; but to be **filled with ALL the fullness of God** utterly bewilders the senses and confounds the understanding. [Clarke]  
How are we doing?

## 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...

How are we doing with Ch.'s 1-3 in practice? God is calling us higher. Way higher  
So why limit our prayers if God is able and willing to do...

- **Exceedingly** above all we ask or think. We are to have hyper faith what God can do
- **Abundantly** above all we ask or think: Beyond measure. How big are willing to pray

He will answer according to the Power which works in us!

- **Power:** gr. *Energeō* plus *En-erg'-i-ah* in v7 used
- **8x** in Ephesians alone. Power that Raised Jesus from dead

How Big are we willing to Pray? How Big is our God? Are we praying like that?

**Ephesians 1:18** [Paul did...] I pray that the eyes of your understanding be enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the **exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe**, according to the working of His **mighty power** 20 which He worked in Christ **when He raised Him from the dead** and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places...

## 21 ...to Him be **glory in the church** by Christ Jesus **to all generations**, forever and ever. Amen.