

“DOCTRINE THAT DELIGHTS”
STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
Ephesians 3:1-13
“Revelation, Salvation, and the Manifold Wisdom of God”

Introduction: What are you willing to do for the sake of the Gospel? What price are you willing to pay to make disciples who live and love like Jesus? The life and ministry of the Apostle Paul challenges all of us to a greater level of commitment and personal sacrifice.

SECTION I: ARE YOU GUILTY OF INTERCULTURAL DISCIPLEMAKING? (Ephesians 3:1,13).

- A. Paul identified himself as the apostle to the Gentiles. His disciple making/church planting ministry was productive and profound. Paul experienced hardship and persecution for the sake of the Gospel (Acts 21:27-28; Acts 25:10-11; Acts 28:30).
- B. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon during his incarceration in Rome. Tychicus, Onesimus, and Epaphroditus were co-workers who delivered these various letters to the various local congregations (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7-9; Philippians 2:25).
- C. Amid personal suffering Paul is encouraging the saints. His suffering was their glory (2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:17-18). What are you willing to suffer for? Paul was willing to suffer for the disciples. Jesus is identified as the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53).

SECTION II: THE GOSPEL IS AN EXAMPLE OF SPECIAL REVELATION (Ephesians 3:2-4)

- A. Paul was given an administration or stewardship of God’s grace. He was given a special assignment to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Are you waiting for a spectacular appearing of Christ to give you orders?
- B. God made the mystery of Christ known to Paul by revelation. Paul testified that he learned the Gospel directly from Christ Jesus (Galatians 1:11-12). The authenticity of the Gospel is proven through the undeniable evidence of a transformed life (Galatians 1:13-24), signs and wonders (Acts 19:11-12), and productive disciple making (1 Corinthians 4:14-15; 1 Corinthians 9:1-2).

SECTION III: PROGRESSIVE REVELATION AND ONE WAY OF SALVATION (Ephesians 3:5-7).

- A. Salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus has always been God’s plan of salvation. (Ephesians 1:4)
- B. Why does Paul call the Gospel a mystery? The Gospel was not made known to the generations prior to Paul. They had expectations, anticipation, and prophetic promises related to the coming of a Savior (1 Peter 1:10-12; Hebrews 9:6-10). Why didn’t God give humanity all of the information at once? (John 16:12-15) Progressive revelation describes how God revealed information incrementally throughout human history. (Hebrews 11:5-6; Genesis 6:9; Job 1:1)

- C. The mystery of Christ has now been revealed to the apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit. The mystery of Christ is that Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel.
- D. Paul became a minister of the Gospel. He was given the gift of the grace of God. Paul's life transformation was completed through the mighty power of God. Only God can transform a sinner into a saint.

SECTION IV: THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD WILL BE MADE KNOWN THROUGH THE CHURCH (Ephesians 3:8-12)

- A. Paul considered himself the lowest ranking saint because of his past. Paul actively sought to destroy the work of the church through leading intense persecution.
- B. Paul's mission was to proclaim the riches of Christ to the Gentiles and to make all see the fellowship of the mystery. Our mission is to proclaim the riches of Christ. We must diligently seek opportunities to represent Christ and proclaim the Good News.
- C. God created all things through Christ. This is an example of progressive revelation. God always existed as one God, three Persons, but this truth is clearly and plainly revealed in the New Testament.
- D. God wants His manifold wisdom to be made known to the spiritual powers by the church. God's multi-faceted wisdom includes God's plan of salvation (the one-time sacrifice to reconcile sinners to Himself, uniting all people groups in the body of Christ, restoring humanity to His creation purpose of worshipping and serving Him as a royal priesthood).
- E. Now, those who are in Christ have boldness and access with confidence. We can come boldly to the throne of grace through trust in Christ (Hebrews 4:16).

WE CANNOT AVOID SUFFERING IN THIS LIFE. YOU WILL EITHER SUFFER AS AN EVIL DOER OR SUFFER FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL. THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS MAKING DISCIPLES WHO LIVE AND LOVE LIKE JESUS IS TO GET SAVED. BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND YOU WILL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

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