

The Church... A *Master* Planned Community
Telling Our Friends About the Master Planned Community (Eph. 3:1-13)
Small Group Study Questions for the week of March 1-7

GETTING STARTED

So many of us shy away from religious discussions. We've been turned off by others who may have been a little overbearing, or even obnoxious. Can you remember the first time you talked to someone about your faith? Maybe it was at work, or with a friend or relative. How did you feel at the time? How did you feel afterwards? What did you learn from that first encounter?

DIGGING DEEP

Read through Ephesians 3:1-13 together as a group

1. Paul is writing this letter from a Roman jail. According to v.1 why does he say he is a prisoner on behalf of the Gentiles? See also Acts 21:17-36.
2. In v.13 the Ephesians were discouraged because of Paul's jail time. Why might that be? How could his suffering be for their glory?
3. What can we learn about the "mystery" in v.2-5? What difference could it make to the Ephesian Gentiles to know this new mystery was hidden from everyone?
4. From v.6, what are the three things that the Gentile believers have in common with the Jewish believers? What impact could this news have these Gentiles?
5. In v.7-9, Paul shares kind of a snapshot personal story of his "call" into the ministry. What can we learn about that call from these verses?
6. When (or if) did you first sense God "calling you" to do something on his behalf? (like teach Sunday school, lead a small group, be an usher, etc...?) What was it like? Did it make a difference in your motivation level?
7. What can we see from Paul's attitude toward himself in v.8 that we can apply to our own situations and the way we volunteer to serve God?
8. Read v.8 in multiple versions of the Bible, --especially *The Message* and the *New Living Translation*. How do they vary?
9. Paul is preaching the "unsearchable riches of Christ" to the Gentiles, or the non-churched crowd. What do you think he means by unsearchable riches?

A MATTER OF PRAYER

10. Take a few minutes in your group to share how Christ has uniquely enriched your life.
11. What role does "The Church" play in v.10-11? How could this truth encourage the Ephesians?
12. Read v.12 in multiple versions of the Bible. Why might the Ephesians need to hear this?

Next Week: Ephesians 3:14-21