

## Sermon Supplement

### Ephesians 3:1-13 – *Worth Suffering For*

#### UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

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1. **Main Idea of the Passage:** God has revealed a new stage in his eternal plan, that Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ as true Israel. All who are believers are a part of this plan and have direct access to the Father. This mystery is to be declared through the church to heavenly authorities in order to demonstrate God's wisdom.
2. **Melodic Line of the Letter:** The two become one for His glory. God the Father, through God the Son, by the power and presence of God the Spirit, is making a multi-ethnic people for the purpose of His glory, based in his eternal plan, in this final age.

#### KEY WORDS/THEMES

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1. **Mystery** – something hidden in past ages.
2. **Revelation** – the mystery cannot be understood without disclosure.
3. **'Your Glory'** – the manifestation of God's grace among the ethnicities, nations, culture, male, female, young, old, rich, poor, etc.
4. **Oneness** – not merely equality, but deep fellowship.

#### STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

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1. The Mystery Explained (vv. 1-6)
  - a. Beginning to pray ... (v. 1)
  - b. The calling and content of Paul's apostolic ministry (vv. 2-6)
2. The Mystery Revealed (vv. 7-12)
  - a. The mystery was revealed to Paul (vv. 1-6)
  - b. And, the mystery was revealed through Paul (vv. 7-9)
  - c. So that the mystery might be made know through the church (v. 10)
  - d. According to the eternal, Jesus-centered plan – and that Jesus is the One who will empower us to walk this way (vv. 11-12).
3. The Mystery Glorified (v. 13)
  - a. This is actually Paul's point: Don't lose heart!
  - b. Because it's worth it ... the gospel at work in the church is worth it! It is glory.

## **GOSPEL CENTRALITY**

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God has created one new humanity through Jesus with all believers being included in this sovereign plan. This manifestation of God's grace and wisdom is to be displayed among all people and to all rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.

## **KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN**

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1. How is God's eternal purpose and mystery, realized and revealed in Christ, intersecting with your daily life?
2. How is God's power working in you, like Paul, to be a minister of the gospel? Take some time to affirm these things in each other.
3. Take some time for silent reflection and then together with boldness and confidence confess your sin to the Father and accept his glorious gift of grace.

## **RESPONDING IN PRAYER**

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1. Thank God for the reality that you are part of the one new humanity through the gospel.
2. Ask that God would help you to understand the mystery, embrace the mystery, and walk in step with the mystery.
3. Pray that we would be a church filled with glory, even if we have to suffer for it.
4. Ask God to help us seek the oneness that includes both equality and deep fellowship.