

Small Group Guide:

"How the Gospel Sends"

Week of April 19, 2026

Series: "The Purpose of the Gospel"

Text: Ephesians 3



Opening Icebreaker

Share a time when you felt completely out of your depth or inadequate for a task, but God used you anyway. What did you learn about God through that experience?

Sermon Overview

This message from Ephesians 3 challenges us to reconsider what it truly means to live as gospel-carriers in our everyday lives. We're confronted with a stark question: are we missionaries or imposters? The apostle Paul, writing from a Roman prison cell, doesn't pray for his own comfort or release—instead, he prays for the church to experience the immeasurable power of God's love and to fulfill their mission. What's striking is that Paul calls himself 'less than the least' of all believers, yet God used him to write half of the New Testament and plant churches across the Roman world. This reminds us that the gospel doesn't call the qualified; it qualifies the called. The message reveals that the 'mystery' Paul speaks of—that Gentiles and Jews are now one family in Christ—was once hidden but is now revealed for all to share. We're invited to grasp the boundless, incalculable riches of Christ—a love so vast that Paul literally invented a new Greek word to describe it. The challenge before us is clear: will we allow Christ to truly dwell in our hearts, not as an occasional visitor but as a permanent resident who has access to every room of our lives? When we do, we become conduits of God's

power to do 'immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.' Our mission isn't about building our own reputation or filling church seats—it's about displaying God's glory to a watching world that desperately needs this hope.

Key Takeaways:

Paul wrote Ephesians while under house arrest in Rome, yet saw his imprisonment as advancing the gospel rather than hindering it

The gospel sends us on behalf of our Savior King—we serve a conquering King whose eternal purposes cannot be thwarted

The mystery of the gospel is that through Christ, Gentiles and Jews are now co-heirs, members of one body, sharers in God's promise

The gospel is not for a particular culture, class, or nationality—it is for everyone, everywhere who believes in Christ

God is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine according to His power at work within us

The goal of mission is not church growth or innovation for its own sake, but the glory of God

Discussion Questions

1. The gospel sends us on behalf of our Savior King

(Ephesians 3:1-3)

Paul called himself "the prisoner of Christ Jesus" rather than "the prisoner of Rome." What does this reveal about how he viewed his circumstances?

How does Paul's perspective on his imprisonment challenge the way we view our own difficult circumstances?

Paul describes the gospel as a "mystery" that was once hidden but now revealed (v. 3-6). What is this mystery, and why is it so significant?

How does understanding that the gospel is for "everyone, everywhere" change the way we approach sharing our faith?

Paul uses a word that doesn't exist in Greek outside the New Testament to describe Christ's riches—they're "incalculable," "unsearchable," "boundless."

When was the last time you were truly amazed by the gospel? What might it mean if we find the gospel "boring"?

2.The gospel sends us with the blessing of God's power

(Ephesians 3:14-21)

Paul prays that Christ would "dwell" (make a permanent home) in our hearts (v. 17).

On a scale of 1-10, how "at home" is Jesus in your heart right now? What areas of your life might you be keeping as "guest rooms" rather than giving Him full access?

"God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (v. 20).

How might we be limiting God by dreaming too small? What would it look like for our group/church to pray bigger prayers?

Practical Application

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

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Pray Paul's Prayer - Pray Ephesians 3:14-21 over yourself and one other person every day this week. Personalize it by inserting names.

Identify Your Mission Field - Write down the names of 3 people in your life who don't know Jesus. Pray for them daily and ask God for one opportunity this week to show them Christ's love.

Share Your Story - Practice telling someone (a Christian friend first, if needed) about how Christ has changed your life. Focus on the "boundless riches" you've experienced in Him.

Evaluate Your "Dwelling" - Do a heart inventory. Are there areas of your life where Christ is just a "guest" rather than fully "at home"? Surrender one specific area to Him this week.

Dream Bigger - Spend time in prayer asking God what "immeasurably more" might look like in your life, your family, or your church. Write down what comes to mind, even if it seems impossible.

Closing Thought *"The gospel is entrusted to broken people so that the power of it is clearly God's to be glorified for and not our own."*

For Further Exploration

Additional Resources

Sermon to Listen to: C.H. Spurgeon (1908)

"A Sermon and a Reminiscence"

<https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/a-sermon-and-a-reminiscence/#flipbook/>