

God's Extreme Measures
A Study through the book of Ephesians
Ephesians 3:1-6

Did you know that God in His great love is willing to go to some extreme measures to bring the miracle of salvation for your unsaved loved one? Let's talk about it!

One of the privileged burdens we are called to bear with Jesus is for our unsaved loved ones. We are tasked to partner with Jesus to intercede in prayer for their salvation, to live the kind of life around them that makes Jesus attractive and to share the good news when the doors open.

Sometimes, however, we can get a bit discouraged when it comes to praying for them because they can go from bad to worse before they get saved. On top of that, it always seems to be taking forever for them to finally see the light of the gospel and be saved.

While we know from the Bible that God wants them to be saved (see John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9), what we tend to forget is the extreme measures God is willing to go in order to bring them to salvation.

To encourage you to keep praying and not give up, our passage today will demonstrate the kinds of extreme measures that God had Paul go through to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. If God did it with Paul, He will also do it with His messengers He is sending to your loved one!

Ephesians 3:1, "For this reason I, Paul a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles - "For this reason," the reason Paul is referring to is the context of our passage, how through Jesus both the Jew and the Gentile can be equally redeemed by God. And by Jesus they have become together one new type of person, comprising His Church (see Ephesians 2).

Notice that Paul doesn't call himself a prisoner of Rome, though that's is where he was incarcerated at. Nor does he say that he is a prisoner because of the unjust treatment of the national Jewish leaders, though that's what happened. He was a prisoner of Christ Jesus.

Paul understood that his negative circumstance was orchestrated by the Lord, in order for him to write most of his epistles for the Gentile believers, and to win other Gentiles to Jesus while in chains (see Philippians 1:12-14, Acts 28:30).

If God was willing to let His apostle go through such extreme measures to win the lost, just think what the extreme measures God is willing to put His messenger through in order to bring salvation to your loved one. Pray for that person the Lord is sending.

Ephesians 3:2-3, "Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you. That is, the mystery made know to me by revelation, as I have written briefly."

What Paul wrote briefly was referring to the entire second chapter of Ephesians. The word mystery here means a truth of God that was veiled in the past but now is disclosed.

This word “revelation” is ‘apokalypsis’ means to experience a divine unveiling of something that God chooses to reveal i.e. the gospel message (see Galatians 1:11-12).

Look at the extremes that God was willing to go to bring the gospel to the Gentile world; He saved and used one of the smartest and most ardent Jews of that day, a man who because he was absolutely loyal to His religion and its traditions, was once an anti-Gentile (see Philippians 3:4-6).

It would seem that Paul would be the opposite of what Gentiles needed. But that was the whole point of God using Paul. The fact that he was saved, was given this revelation of the gospel and now by Jesus had an abiding love for the Gentiles, is in itself a miracle sent by God.

Because God wants our unsaved loved ones to come to salvation in Jesus, He will do the same kind of extreme thing. As we pray, ask Him to bring in our loved one’s path people of miracles; to love them, to demonstrate Jesus to them, to help open their eyes, to minister God’s touch.

Ephesians 3:4-5, “In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets.”

It was in God’s strategic timing that by the Holy Spirit He revealed through the apostles and prophets that God brought forth His salvation in Jesus for both the Jew and Gentile alike.

It was by sending the Holy Spirit as He worked in their hearts and minds that they knew and understood what God was doing.

If God was willing to do such an extreme thing by sending the Holy Spirit to work in the apostles’ and prophets’ hearts for the sake of the Gentiles. God will also move in the hearts of our unsaved loved ones through the Holy Spirit to help them understand and accept the gospel.

Pray that God will move in their hearts with Holy Spirit conviction according to what Jesus promised in John 16:8, “when He comes He will convict of sin, and righteousness and judgment.”

Pray also that God will send the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts just like He did with Lydia in Acts 16:14b, “The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message.”

And Pray that the Holy Spirit will do with them what Jesus did with the disciples in Luke 24:45, “Then He opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures.”

Finally pray that the Holy Spirit brings godly fear and godly sorrow as He did with those when Peter shared the gospel with in Acts 2:37, “When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers what shall we do?”

To recap: **Ephesians 3:6, “This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”**