

Ephesians 3:3-14

3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. 4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, 7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; 10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. 13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory. 14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,

I. Paul was given a revelation and he had actually written briefly about this to the Ephesians previously: "as I wrote before in brief." He tells them "by referring to this" that they can understand how he came to this insight that he received.

II. **The mystery** - mysterion (mü-sta'-re-on) - a hidden or secret thing, not obvious to the understanding.

a. The mystery of all mysteries is that God was going to create the Church:

b. **5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;**

i. Paul is telling this group and allowing us as readers to know that this grand mystery wasn't known until the moment that God decided to reveal it to Him and the other apostles by the Holy Spirit.

ii. The point is there wasn't scripture to go to have this revealed to them. There wasn't wise counsel from others they could go to it had to be revealed to them in some way by the Spirit.

iii. We see how this was done for Peter:

1. **Acts 10:9-35 (NASB95)** 9 On the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. 10 But he became hungry and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance; 11 and he saw the sky opened up, and an object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground, 12 and there were in it all kinds of four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air. 13 A voice came to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat!" 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." 15 Again a voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy." 16 This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into the sky. 17 Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon's house, appeared at the gate; 18 and calling out, they were asking whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was

staying there. 19 While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are looking for you. 20 “But get up, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them Myself...28 And he said to them, “You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. 29 “That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for. So I ask for what reason you have sent for me...34 Opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, 35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

c. 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

- i. **Through the Gospel** - Notice that the Jew and Gentile believe the same thing for salvation then. They both believe the gospel, that gospel is that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the One who restores peace with God. Peter says this as well:

1. Acts 15:7-9,11 (NASB95) 7 After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. 8 “And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; 9 and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith...11 “But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”

d.7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

- i. **According to the gift of God’s grace** - Paul tells us that he was made a minister of this gospel to the Gentiles because of God’s grace.

1. **Grace** - unmerited favor

2. Paul is saying that there was nothing in him that warranted him being made the minister that God made him to the Gentiles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. This is where we see the greatness of the Apostle Paul. He knew that fine line between where he ends and God begins (less of me and more of Him). The truth is Paul was brought to a place where he realized there’s really no fine line at all.

4. It’s not in you having this space where you begin and end so Christ can begin. You have to just end and it’s only Jesus.

a. **2 Corinthians 12:9 (NASB95)** 9 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

5. Wouldn’t it have been easy for Paul to come up with some objective reasons for why God chose to use him:

- a. Pharisee who knew the Law well.
- b. Educated by the best

c. Unrelenting personality

6. Paul knew that it was none of those things. It was simply God's grace.

a. **2 Corinthians 3:5 (NASB95)** Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,

e. **8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,**

i. **Unfathomable** - anexichniastos (ä-ne-ksekh-ne'-ä-stos) - that cannot be searched out, that cannot be comprehended

1. **Comprehend** - to understand the nature or meaning of; grasp with the mind; perceive:

ii. **What it is that Paul is saying that you and I's minds are incapable of grasping:** The riches of Christ.

1. **Facts about The World's largest home:**

a. Antilia (located in Mumbai) 400,000 Square Feet valued between \$2-3 billion.

b. The home has 27 floors with extra-height which are of double of the normal height and thus it looks like as tall as 60 storey building.

c. There are about 600 staff members engaged in work everyday to maintain this mansion.

d. It is designed in such a way that it can survive an earthquake rated 8.5 on the Richter Scale.

e. 50 seat movie theater, salon and ice cream parlor and a room that creates man made snow.

f. 3 helipads

g. One of the floors is fully reserved for parking of family cars which are about 170 in numbers and there are also a private car servicing center on one of the floors.

2. As unfathomable as those riches are, they are not unfathomable any longer because we just heard about them and anyone can go online and see the house so now they're fathomable.

3. Yet we learn from the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul that the riches of Jesus Christ are unfathomable!

f. Here is what scripture says Christ is rich in:

i. Grace

ii. Mercy

iii. Kindness

iv. Wisdom

v. Knowledge

vi. Tolerance

vii. Patience

g. **8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the**

administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;

- i. **Ephesians 3:9 (NLT)** I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning.
- h. This was completely unknown in times past. It was completely unknown to everyone and everything except for God Himself:
 - i. Why did He keep it a secret?
- i. **10** so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. **11** This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,
 - i. **Through the church** - God is using the new creature that is the church to reveal to ***“the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places”*** that He is the One who is sovereign and in control.
 - ii. **This mystery is not mentioned in the OT, it’s not revealed by Jesus. Therefore NO ONE knows about this plan. Not:**
 1. Angels
 2. Prophets
 3. Any other spiritual being
 4. Satan
 - iii. Therefore, the Church is a direct manifestation or evidence of the plan that God was going to execute through His Son. Remember, we were created because of Jesus’ death and resurrection. In other words, ***“Through the church”*** means we are who God is using as evidence that His plan to elevate His Son above “every name” is going to be accomplished.
 - iv. If you’ve ever wondered why Satan despises and hates you, look no further than this verse. God hid from Satan that He was not only going to save the Jewish man, He was going to save ALL of mankind, not just a single people group but an entirely new entity called the Church. Which His Son would be the head over and He would eventually marry.
 1. Part of the Father’s plan was to hide from the enemy, His Son’s Bride. Think about that for a moment. You are so important to God that He kept you hidden from Satan for His Son.
 2. Which also explains a reason that Satan hates marriage. The institution of marriage itself is a reminder that Satan lost.
 - v. He hates you because you are dear and treasured by the Father and Son and he hates you and I because you are a continual reminder that he lost to God via a plan that he wasn’t privy to!
- j. Paul is a bit overwhelmed that this incredible plan that God has enacted for ALL of mankind and the fact that God has chosen him, of all people to be the one that He would reveal this eternal plan to and make him an Apostle for this eternal purpose.

III. **Ephesians 3:14 (NASB95)** 14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,