

Ephesians 3:1-13

A. Introduction

- Jesus has abolished the barrier between Jews and Gentiles and united them in the one body – a “**new humanity**” (Ephesians 2:14-18).
- God’s presence is now in the spiritual temple of the church (2:21-22).
- Paul prepares to pray for the church (3:1), but before he does he reminds them that his imprisonment is for their sake (3:2-13).

B. The Mystery revealed (3:1-6)

Paul is in prison for the sake of the Gentiles (3:1). He is entrusted with the gospel of grace (3:2), which he describes as a “**mystery**” (3:3,4,6,9).

❖ **The origin of the mystery**

- A mystery is a truth which is unknown until it is revealed.
- It was revealed to Paul by Jesus on the Damascus road (3:2-5; Galatians 1:11-16).

❖ **The contents of the mystery**

- It focuses on Christ (Colossians 1:26-27; 2:2; 1 Timothy 3:16).
- It concerns God’s plan of salvation (1:9-10; Romans 16:25).
- It is manifest in the amazing unity which God has established between Jews and Gentiles in the Church (3:6).
 - ⇒ They are joint heirs (1:13-14; Romans 8:17);
 - ⇒ They form one body (2:15-16); and,
 - ⇒ They share in the promises of God – especially the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-39; Ephesians 1:13-14).
- The Old Testament anticipated Gentile blessings (Genesis 12:1-3). It did not foresee was the fullness and freeness of these blessings.

C. The Ministry received (7-9)

Paul’s chains did not invalidate his ministry or frustrate God’s purposes.

❖ **The Source of his ministry**

- Paul emphasizes that his ministry was based on grace (3:2,7).
- God had turned a persecutor to a preacher (1 Timothy 1:15).

❖ **The Substance of his ministry**

- God called him to preach the good news of Jesus Christ (3:8).
- All the treasures of God lie in Christ and we receive countless blessings in and through Him.

❖ **The Scope of his ministry**

- Paul was sent to “*make this plain*” (literally – “*bring it clearly into the light*”). Our secrets/mysteries are for sharing.
- This for all people irrespective of their background (Romans 1:16-17)

D. The Mission accomplished (10-13)

- God’s ultimate purpose for this fractured world is to unite everything under the headship of Christ (1:9-10).
- The unity of the Church is a foretaste or demonstration of this eternal purpose in the present age (3:10-11).
- The demonstration of God’s multifaceted wisdom is for the invisible spiritual powers (angels and demons – 6:10-13).
- God says “Look at my Church! Look at her access to me! (3:12). Look at the unity which will one day exist in the whole cosmos!”
- Angels are amazed and demons are terrified by this revelation.
- Paul is in prison for the sake of this breath-taking truth (3:13).