

# The Mystery Of God Revealed

## Ephesians 3:1-21

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**Lesson Aim:** To reveal the mystery of Christ and the manifold wisdom of God in bringing Jews and Gentiles together into one new body, the church. To demonstrate how the theological concept of “progressive revelation” relates to this mystery. To celebrate with Paul the incredible grace and love that God poured out onto each of us who are in Christ.

### DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

#### Part I: The mystery of Jews and Gentiles together into “one church” revealed (Eph. 3:1-7)

- \* What does it mean to be under house arrest (vs. 1)? (See Acts 28:16,30)  
What was the reason for Paul’s imprisonment? (See Acts 22:19-22)
  
- \* Define “dispensation”. (See Dictionary) What is meant by the term “the dispensation of the grace of God” (vs. 2)? How did Paul fit into the administration of this grace? (See Gal. 1:16; 2:7-8)
  
- \* Define the word “mystery” (vs. 3)? (See Dictionary) What is “the mystery of Christ” that “in other ages was not made known” (vv. 3-5)? (See vs. 6) Are there other mysteries found in the New Testament? (See 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Col. 1:27; 1 Tim. 3:16)
  
- \* Define the difference between Revelation / Inspiration / Illumination. How do the three work together in our understanding of the Word of God?
  
- \* What does it mean to be an heir (vs. 6)? (See Dictionary) To be fellow heirs?

- \* What did Paul receive as a gift from God to use in ministry (vs. 7)? According to verse 7, what is essential for every minister of Christ to minister effectively?

## **Part II: The heavenly purpose of this mystery of God (Eph. 3:8–13)**

- \* Why did Paul consider himself “less than the least of all the saints” (vs. 8)? (See Acts 7:54–8:3; 1 Tim. 1:15) For what purpose was grace given to Paul (vs. 8)? (See Rom. 11:13)
- \* What is the meaning of the theological term “Progressive Revelation” (vs. 9)? Do the following scriptures demonstrate the concept of “Progressive Revelation”? (See Gen. 12:1–3; Isa. 49:6; Eph. 3:4–6) If so, how?
- \* What is “the manifold wisdom of God” spoken of in verse 10? (Hint: See vs. 6) According to verse 10, do the angels know all things, or are they still learning? Does God use the church to teach the angels? (See 1 Cor. 11:7–10)
- \* What is God’s eternal purpose in Christ Jesus (vs. 11)? (See Eph. 2:13–17) What privilege does the New Testament believer have in Christ that the Old Testament saints did not have (vs. 12)? (See Heb. 4:14–16)
- \* On a scale of 1–10, how would you rate your prayer life? Why? What is the hardest thing about praying? What would need to take place for you to become bolder in your prayers?
- \* Have you ever suffered for your faith in Christ? If so, when and where? Why did you suffer? From a spiritual perspective, what has come out of that suffering?

- \* Why did Paul encourage the Ephesians not to lose heart (**vs. 13**)? Why was Paul under house arrest and going through tribulation at the time of this writing? (**See Acts 22:19–22**) How did his tribulation work out for the Ephesian’s glory? Have you found in your own life that your trials and tribulations have often worked out for good? (**See Jam. 1:2–4**) Can you share an example of a trial in your life that worked out for good spiritually?

### **Part III: Paul driven to worship by the revelation of God’s grand mystery (Eph. 3:14–21)**

- \* In what posture of worship do you feel the closest to God (**vs. 14**)? Why? What various postures of worship do we find demonstrated in the Bible? (**See Eph. 3:14; 1 Kin. 8:22; 1 Chron. 17:16; Psa. 134:2; Matt. 26:39**)
- \* Who comprises “the whole family” in heaven and earth (**vs. 15**)? According to verse 16, what is the first petition in Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians? How does the Holy Spirit strengthen the inner man? (**See Rom. 5:5; 15:13; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 2:4**) What is the benefit to us?
- \* What is needed for a mighty redwood tree to grow taller and stronger? (Note: These trees can be almost 400 feet tall and live 2,200 years.) Why is the redwood tree such a good illustration of what the Christian life should be? Why is it important for Christians to be “rooted and grounded in love” (**vs. 17**)?
- \* According to verses 18 and 19, what is Paul praying that the Christian will comprehend? Why is it so difficult to comprehend the scope of that love (**vs. 19**)? People become physically weaker with age. What should happen to people as they age in the faith spiritually?
- \* What does it mean to be “filled with all the fullness of God” (**vs. 19**)? This fullness is available to us through the power of the Holy Spirit. How do we

draw on this power? (See Rom. 8:26,27; Gal. 5:22–25; Eph. 5:18–21)

- \* As a result of the incredible grace and love of God, Paul closes this first section of the book of Ephesians (**Chapters 1–3**) with a doxology. What is a “doxology” and why is it appropriate here? (See Dictionary) According to Paul, how great of a work can we expect God to do in our lives when we trust Him (**vs. 20**)? Who should always get the glory for that work (**vs. 21**)?
  
- \* Why are verses 20 & 21 excellent verses for every Christian to memorize? How can these scriptures be used to encourage you during difficult times?

### **MINER’S CORNER: Manna to live by!**

1. The mystery of Christ finally revealed is that both Jews and Gentiles will be fellow heirs of the same body – the church, and partakers of God’s promises in Christ through the gospel.
2. The manifold wisdom of God is being revealed to the angels through the church.
3. In Christ, we are told to come boldly before the throne of God in prayer.
4. Suffering for Christ is not a bad thing, but rather a glorious thing when some are brought to salvation and others strengthened in their faith because of it.
5. The Christian should be like a mighty redwood tree: well watered, rooted and grounded in love, strengthened by the storms of life and ever reaching towards the heavens.
6. The overflow of our daily quiet times with God should be hearts filled with praise and worship, an excitement so rich it can barely be contained. Shalom (think about it!)