

MYSTERY REVEALED

Ephesians 3:1-13

I. MINISTRY OF PAUL (1,2, 7-9)**A. Made a Minister of the Gospel (7a; Act 22:14-15)—Jesus appointed him****B. Given a Gift of Grace (2)—spiritual gift****1. By God (7b)— God made Paul a steward of the gift****2. To Me (8)—the least of all the saints, grace was given****a. God's Choice (Act 9:15)—unlikely people to be His saints and ministers****b. God's Power (2 Cor 12:9; Col 1:29)—grace to carry out the ministry****3. For You (2b)—the gift God gave to Paul was not for his own personal benefit but for others (Gentiles)****a. You are a steward of the grace given to you.****b. The gifts of God are to be employed for the people of God.****C. Paul's Particular Mission (Acts 18:4)—apostle to the Gentiles****1. Preach to the Gentiles (8b; Act 22:21)—you're included!****2. Bring to light for Everyone (9; Act 9:22;18:4; Gal 2:11-14)—the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God****II. MYSTERY OF CHRIST (3-6, 9, 11; Dan 2:21-22, 28, 30, 47)—inclusion of Gentiles and Jews in Christ through the gospel****A. Hidden for Ages in God (5, 9, 11)****1. Atonement of Christ always the plan (9b, 11)—before world's foundation****2. Not spelled out for previous generations (5a)—but hinted****B. Revealed to apostles and prophets by Holy Spirit (3, 5b; Lk 24:27)****1. Revealed BY the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26 & 16:13)—divine authority****a. The NT Church interpreted everything in light of OT Scriptures.
(Act 2:16; 26:22b)****b. God will not contradict anything He said previously. (Act 17:11)****2. Revealed TO the holy apostles and prophets (Eph 2:20; 4:11)—laid the foundation of the Church****a. Apostles—authority of being primary witnesses of the gospel facts**

- b. **Prophets**—living guidance of the Holy Spirit
- c. **Paul** (Gal 1:11-12, 15-16; Act 26:12-18)—Apostle to the Gentiles

C. Realized in Christ Jesus our Lord (11-12; Gal 4:4-5)—eternal plan brought to fulfillment and revealed in Christ

1. **Jesus Christ is the central focus of scripture and human history.**
2. **Not even Jews previously had free access into the Holy of Holies.**
3. **In Jesus, Jews and Gentiles alike have free access to the Father.**

III. PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH (10)—to display the wisdom and glory of God

A. The Manifold Wisdom of God (Rev 7:9; 21:24-26)—variegated, many sided, multifaceted, many-splendored

B. The Witness of the Church—God’s ability to reconcile all things in Jesus; church is the place where God’s manifold wisdom is displayed

C. Spiritual Powers in Heavenly Realm (1 Pet 1:12; 1 Cor 2:7-8)—observe us

IV. GLORY IN SUFFERING (1,13; 2 Tim 2:10;)

A. A Prisoner of Christ (Gen 50:20)—in God’s providence for good purpose

B. Suffering for You (Act 9:16; 2 Cor 4:17; Rom 8:17-18; Phil 1:29-30)

1. **Voluntary suffering for love and good cause has transcendent meaning.**
2. **Jesus is the example of suffering to bring good to someone else.**

C. Being Encouraged—my suffering doesn’t mean my efforts have failed

D. For Your Glory

1. **Shows your status** (Gal 6:14)—how much you are loved
2. **Will result in your glory** (Rom 8:17-18; 2 Cor 4:15-18)—I am willing to suffer in order to see you brought to final glory.