

Knowing Christ

A Study of Ephesians

The Church and the Eternal Purpose of God

Lesson 3

Ephesians 3

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School

January 19, 2020

Ephesians

the Church of Jesus Christ				prison epistle 60	
①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
the foundation of the Church			the function of the Church		
the ministry of salvation	the life in Christ	the ministry to Gentiles	the walk in Christ		the stand in Christ
<u>salutation</u> 1-2 <u>doxology</u> 3-6 Father 7-12 Christ 13-14 Holy Spirit <u>prayer</u> 15-23	<u>Jews & Gentiles</u> <u>individual new life</u> 1-3 past life 4-10 present life <u>Jews & Gentiles</u> <u>corporate church life</u> 11-12 past life 13-22 present life	<u>God's revelation</u> 1-7 the mystery of Christ 8-13 the ministry of the mystery of Christ <u>prayer</u> 14-19 Christ may dwell in your hearts <u>benediction</u> 20-21	<u>general</u> <u>the Christian walk</u> 4:1-16 the worthy walk 4:17-19 the no longer walk 4:20-32 the old and new walk 5:1-6 the walk in love 5:7-14 the walk in truth 5:15-21 the walk in wisdom	<u>specific</u> <u>family walk</u> wives 5:22-24 husbands 5:25-33 children 6:1-3 fathers 6:4 <u>work walk</u> servants 6:5-8 masters 6:9	<u>spiritual warfare</u> strength 10-11 enemies 12 armor 13-17 prayer 18-20 <u>final word</u> 21-24

Ephesians 1

- ▶ A letter from Paul to the faithful in Christ Jesus (1:1-2)
- ▶ A song of praise in one sentence (1:3-14)
 - Father – He chose and predestined us to the praise of the glory of His grace
 - Son – He redeemed us and revealed His eternal purpose in Himself to the praise of His glory
 - Spirit – He sealed (guarantees) our inheritance to the glory of God
- ▶ A prayer that the believers will fully know and participate in His glory

Ephesians 2

- ▶ The work of salvation in one sentence (2:1-10)
- ▶ The hopeless condition and future of the unbeliever
- ▶ The immensity of God's mercy, love, grace, power, and kindness for sinners
- ▶ We are His workmanship in Christ Jesus – a gift of God
- ▶ We are part of unified work of God for Jews and Gentiles – a holy temple in Christ

Ephesians 3

- ▶ A prayer started, but delayed while Paul digresses (3:1)
- ▶ Paul's explanation of his ministry in 3 sentences (3:2-13)
 - The mystery of Christ (3:2-7)
 - The administration of the mystery (3:8-12)
 - The glory of Paul's ministry (3:13)
- ▶ Paul prays for the believers (3:14-21)
 - The power of the Spirit
 - The presence of Christ
 - The infinite supply and duration of the glory of God in the church

The Prisoner of Christ Jesus (3:1)

- ▶ The striking contrast between Paul's message and his circumstances
- ▶ Paul's call (Acts 9:15-16; 20, 22)
- ▶ Paul's arrest (Acts 22:21-22; 26:19-21)
- ▶ A prisoner of Christ Jesus for the glory of the believers
- ▶ Paul digresses to explain more about his ministry – the mystery and the administration

The Mystery of Christ (3:2-7)

- ▶ The revelation of the mystery of His will and a suitable administration (1:9-10)
- ▶ The secret counsel of God which is hidden from human reason or discovery
 - Ephesians 3:5 – not made known to previous generations
 - 1 Corinthians 2:1-2, 7-10 – predestined before time but hidden from men
 - Colossians 1:26 – hidden from past ages, but now revealed
 - Daniel 2, 4 – mysteries (dreams and prophecy) revealed to Daniel
 - Matthew 13:10-11, 35 - parables – mysteries of the Kingdom
 - Divine truth that is newly revealed in time
 - Isaiah 45:15 – “a God who hides Himself”
 - Deuteronomy 29:29 – “the secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us . . .”

The Mystery of Christ (3:2-7)

- ▶ Ephesians 3:6 – Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body through the Gospel
- ▶ Romans 11:25 – partial hardening of the Jews until fullness of the Gentiles has come in
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 15:51 – the resurrection and transformation of believers at Christ's return
- ▶ Colossians 1:27 – Christ in you, the hope of glory
- ▶ Colossians 2:2 – God's mystery is Christ
- ▶ Colossians 4:3 – the message of Christ “for which I have also been imprisoned”
- ▶ Ephesians 5:32 – the union of Christ and the Church
- ▶ Ephesians 6:19 – the mystery of the Gospel
- ▶ Revelation 10:7 – the mystery of the end of the age
- ▶ Paul's message was the centrality of Christ (Acts 9:20, 22; 1 Corinthians 2:2; Ephesians 1:9-10)
- ▶ The Gospel ministry is proclamation of this mystery to a new generation

The Administration of the Mystery (3:8-12)

- ▶ Vine: The management of a household, or of household affairs
- ▶ Greek: *oikonomia* – literally house (*oiko*) law (*nomia*)
- ▶ Administration, Dispensation, Stewardship, Management, Plan
- ▶ Luke 16:2-4 – the unfaithful steward in the master's house
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 9:17 – Paul's ministry was "a stewardship entrusted to me"
- ▶ Colossians 1:25 – Paul was a minister according to the stewardship of God
- ▶ 1 Timothy 1:4 – focus on furthering the administration of God which is by faith
- ▶ Ephesians 1:10 – an administration suitable to the fullness of the times
- ▶ Ephesians 3:2 – the stewardship of God's grace for the Gentiles
- ▶ Ephesians 3:9 – bring to light the administration of the mystery, previously hidden

The Administration of the Mystery (3:8-12)

- ▶ Our obligation to proclaim the administration of the mystery
 - The Gospel of Jesus Christ – the mystery of Christ
 - The organization of the Church – the administration of the mystery
- ▶ The manifold wisdom of God – the eternal purpose of God (3:10-11)

Christ's Prisoner is the Gentiles' Glory (3:13)

- ▶ Paul is “a prisoner for the sake of you Gentiles” (3:1)
- ▶ He is a prisoner for being a steward of the mystery of Christ
 - “. . . bear My name before the Gentiles” (Acts 9:15)
 - “. . . suffer for My name's sake” (Acts 9:16)
- ▶ This is due to his union with Christ – a life entrusted to God (1 Peter 3:19)

Paul Prays for the Believers (3:12-21)

- ▶ “For this reason . . .” We are of God’s household; a dwelling of God in the Spirit
 - The whole family in heaven and earth derives its name from God
- ▶ “. . . to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man”
- ▶ “. . . for Christ to dwell in our hearts by faith”
- ▶ “. . . to comprehend the love of God with all the saints
- ▶ “. . . to be filled with the fullness of God.”
- ▶ Benediction:
 - God is able to do more than we can ask or think by His power within us
 - God will receive glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus forever

The Eternal Purpose of God

- ▶ The fullness of the times – the summing up of all things in Christ (1:10)
- ▶ The unveiling of the mystery of Christ – the fullness of God in the believer through faith
- ▶ An administration (plan; stewardship, management, dispensation) suitable to Christ
- ▶ The only means for the household of God to be to the praise of His glory
- ▶ For this reason . . . we pray to the Father as Paul demonstrated in his two prayers