

Title

Eph 3.1 - The Mystery of God

Date

RG 04-27-2016

Review of Last Week's Discussion Points

The Temple of God → Eph 2:14-3:6

1. Through Jesus Christ the law has been fulfilled for all mankind and there are no longer any distinctions between men.
2. Through faith in the saving work of Jesus' Cross all mankind has access to our Father restored and are given One Spirit.
3. God's household is a Holy Temple which is built on the foundation of the Apostle's and Prophets with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone.
4. The truth about God's love and plans for Jew and Gentile alike is a mystery that has now been revealed through the working of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction:

Paul introduced the new temple, the church in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 Paul speaks about the gathering of individual parts, incorporating them into the Body of Christ, assigning them a purpose and providing the fuel and power to make it work.

Leading Question/s:

When you are building a car what steps do you take to ensure each part operates properly?

Does it matter how the parts are arranged?

What makes it go? What will keep it from going?

Background:

Preparation Questions:

Have you considered where you fit? What your purpose is? How you will live it out? Who might be watching?

Ephesians 3:7-21

7 I became a **servant of this gospel** by the gift of God's grace given me through the **working of his power**. 8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the **boundless riches** of Christ, 9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of **this mystery**, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. 10 His intent was that now, through the church, **the manifold wisdom of God should be made known** to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his **eternal purpose** that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In him and **through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence**. 13 I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

A Prayer for the Ephesians

14 For this reason **I kneel before the Father**, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16 **I pray** that out of his glorious riches **he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit** in **your inner being**, 17 so that **Christ may dwell in your hearts** through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp **how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ**, 19 and to know **this love that surpasses knowledge**—that **you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God**.

20 Now to him who is **able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine**, according to his power that is at work **within us**, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Questions:

Vs 7 - 8 What is Paul's primary service to God? Where does he receive the power to complete this service? What kind of riches were the gentiles invited to participate in through Christ?

Vs 9 Paul uses the term mystery in this verse not as like we would today as something to be uncovered but as something that was unknown for a very long time and has now been revealed. The mystery Paul refers to is "The Church", "The Body of Christ", "the Household of God" which includes Jews and Gentiles and was not foreseen in the Old Testament.

Vs 10 states one of the purposes for God to reveal the mystery of the church, what is it?

Vs 11 According to verse 11, how long has God been planning to create the church through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Vs 12 If we are "In Christ" what new / restored privilege do we now enjoy? See Hebrews 4:16

Paul's second Prayer for the Church

Vs 14 In this verse we see Paul exercising his access to God by doing what?

Vs 16 How does God strengthen His people? Where does God's Spirit now reside? See Jn 14:16, 26, Jn 16:13-15

Vs 17 Who else dwells in our hearts? See also Jn 14:23

Vs 18-19 According to these verses what is it that we need God's divine power to comprehend?

Vs 19 When Paul says "You" may be filled with all the fullness of God I believe he is speaking of the corporate "you" meaning the body of Christ, the church as in vs Eph 1:22-23. Together we are filled to become the manifestation of Christ to the world.

Vs 20 What is God able to do with the church? Where is His power working?

Vs 21 What does God richly deserve for the wonderful things He is doing in and among us who belong to the body of Christ, His Church?

Principles / Eternal Truth's:

- God calls individuals into service for His plan of redemption by His own power and according to His own good purpose (Paul is an example).
- Through the mystery of the Church God has made the glory of His wisdom known to all angels in the heavenly realms.
- Through the work of Jesus Christ access to God has been restored to those who believe.
- God takes up residence in the heart of the New Testament believer and works His power to strengthen, guide and teach the believer.
- God also works within the entire body of Christ to make His presence and His love known to the world.

Application - Our proper response, Behavior, Attitude based on this Eternal Truth:

Fill in your plan on how you might apply what you have learned.

1 Pray and seek God's good purpose for calling you into the Body of Christ.

2 Consider how we as a church might cause angels to glory in God's work in us.

3 Pray often, enjoy the access that you have to God the Father through Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

4 How are you cooperating with God to allow Him to teach, guide and strengthen you?

5 Seek ways to make God's presence and love known to those you encounter this week.

Companion Verses:

Hebrews 4:14-16 14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

John 14:16-17 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth

John 14:26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you

John 16:13-15 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him

Eph 1:2 2-23 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

