



**Title:** Mystery Made Known (Ephesians series)

**Text:** Ephesians 3:1-13

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**Date:** 01.08.12

*1 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— 2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3 how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly.*

- Paul breaks off his line of thinking into a digression about his calling by Jesus.
  - Acts 9:1-7
  - Galatians 1:12
  - Acts 22:17-21

*4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.*

- What does Paul mean by mystery?
  - Not what we mean. Not a riddle to be solved or clues to be pieced together. It is not something hidden we have to discover, rather something revealed by God because we would never have discovered it otherwise. A 'mystery' is an astonishing counterintuitive revelation.

*6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*

- Paul clearly states what the mystery is:
  - "To sum up: The mystery or open secret of Christ is 'the complete union of Jews and Gentiles with each other through the union of both with Christ. It is the double union, with Christ and with each other, which is the substance of the "mystery"'. (O'Brien)
- In Christ through the gospel
  1. The content of the Gospel
  2. The power of the Gospel
    - Romans 10:17
    - 2 Thess 2:13-14

*7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. 8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,*

- Notice Paul's low view of self and high view of God's grace.

*9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, 10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.*

- God's wisdom on display through the church—high point of this passage (v.10)
  - God has determined to "manifold" (very many sided) wisdom through the church.
  - "Most interpreters believe that Paul has in mind neither evangelism, social action, nor any additional activity by God's people. Instead, through the church signifies that the very existence of this new multiracial community in which Jews and Gentiles have been brought together in unity in the one body is the manifestation of God's richly diverse wisdom. Its

presence is the means by which God himself discloses to the powers his own richly diverse wisdom." (O'Brien)

*11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. 13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.*

**THE MAIN POINT OF EPHESIANS 3:1-13**

God has reconciled and saved a people from among both Jew and Gentiles through Jesus' life, death and resurrection and united them together in the church. The church is now the primary display of his wisdom and greatness.

**Seeing this plan of God should cause us to see:**

- 1. GOD DISPLAYS HIS WISDOM THROUGH THE CHURCH.**
- 2. WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT SUFFERING SERVES GOD'S PURPOSES.**
- 3. WE CAN BE FREE FROM INDIVIDUALISM.**