

**God's Mystery
The Church
Ephesians 3:1-13**

I. A New Revelation – 3:1-6

1. Cause of Paul's imprisonment – 1
God gave Paul a new revelation "Mystery"
Greek word means something previously unknown
Content was so radical it caused opposition
Jews stirred up by content they wanted to kill Paul
He is in prison because of "you Gentiles"
But he sees his situation as a "prisoner of Christ Jesus"
2. Message given to Paul – God's grace - 2
God was extending His grace to Gentiles
This stirred up the anger of the Jews– Acts 22:20-22
3. This message was a new revelation – 3-5
This truth came by direct revelation from God - 3
Had to do with the truth about Jesus Christ – 4
Paul, as a Jew, was opposed to Jesus as Messiah
Until his experience on the road to Damascus –
Acts 9
Since then God revealed the truth to him about Christ
"Mystery" of Christ was not known previously – 5
Not known to other generations of Jewish leaders
"Now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit"
4. Content of new revelation – 6
That God's grace includes Gentiles
They are "fellow heirs" with Jewish believers
They are "members of the same body"
"Partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus"
"through the gospel" God's good news

II. A New Responsibility – 3:7-9

1. Paul made a minister of this gospel – 7
This came to him as a "gift of God's grace"
It came to him "by the working of His power"
God intercepted him in a powerful way
He blinded him with a glorious vision of Christ
Knocked him off of his horse
Spoke directly to him from heaven
But greatness of His power was internal transformation
God put love in his heart to minister to Gentiles
Willing to suffer for the Lord Jesus & for His cause
Acts 9:15-16
2. Paul's unworthiness of this honor – 8-9
Saw himself as the least of all the saints - 8
He was a persecutor of those who followed Christ
Acts 8:1-3 describes his hostility
That God would entrust him with His message – 8-9
"To preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ"

"To bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things"

A New Fulfillment – 3:10-13

1. God's people in the Church – 10
In Eph. 1:3-14 Paul spoke of God's eternal plan
To have a people for His name with whom He can fellowship eternally
This now is accomplished through redemptive work of Christ
As Jews & Gentiles are one body – the Church
Angels of God are in awe at God's wisdom –
1 Pet. 1:10-12
2. God's eternal purpose is fulfilled in Christ – 11
Jews & Gentiles are one body in Christ
3. As the body of Christ we stand before God – 12
Confident of His acceptance in Christ
Our faith is strengthened as we see what He has done –
12
4. He encourages them not to lose heart – 13
Don't allow my sufferings to distress you
Trust God as you approach Him on my behalf
Watch how God works it out for His glory
Paul is willing to suffer for those who believe his message
While it brings suffering for him it brings glory to his readers