

From Grace to Mission

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A Study in Ephesians 3:1-13

Ephesians 2:1–10 —*Miracle of Grace* from spiritual death to spiritual life through faith in Jesus.
Ephesians 2:11–22 —*Grace Builds Bridges* bringing those far away to one family in Christ.
Ephesians 3:1–13 —*From Grace to Mission*—how grace changes *our life and behavior*

AV **Ephesians 3:1** “*For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.*”

Even in a prison, the apostle knows that God is working out His purpose and plan. From prison he proclaims the Gospel—to those who feel unworthy, unaccepted, and don’t belong.

The *miracle of grace* that saved the apostle also changed his life. It is the *same grace* that can save us and *change* us by our repentance and faithful obedience to His Word—leading to what He wants us to be.

The grace of God promises the greatest of all blessings—eternal living with Him and all others *saved by His grace*.

Prior to conversion and change of heart conviction, the apostle persecuted those who believed in Jesus; *After* his conversion, his behavior radically *changed*—he now proclaims that Jesus *is* who He says He is—the only One who can give the *grace* we need to escape the coming wrath.

I Divine Revelation of the Mystery

NKJV **Ephesians 3:2** “*If indeed you have heard of the dispensation [the giving out] of the grace of God which was given to me for you [announcing his favor to you NLT]:*

3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already),”

The word *mystery* here is not something difficult to understand, but just what God kept hidden in previous ages and now revealed. God gave the apostle that enlightenment so he would then tell it to the Gentiles.

The Greek *mysterion* means something God makes known. It is concealed in the Old Testament but revealed through Christ in the New Testament.

Ephesians 3:4 “*by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),*

5 which in other ages [generations] was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:”

Verse 2—The apostle is given the responsibility of announcing God’s grace to the Gentiles; he did not take on that task of his own desire, but God *appointed* him to do it.

3—The *mystery* is revealed to him by God;

4—“*Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.*”

5—No longer a secret “*in other ages was not made known*” but *now revealed.*”

Ephesians 3:6 “*That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.*”

No need for anyone to think they are unworthy or have to stand apart from God’s people. There are no second-class citizens in God’s kingdom—

All are *fellow heirs, members of the same body, partakers of the promise* through *faith* in the same Lord and Savior and Messiah.

Grace Builds Bridges says that God didn’t just make a way for Gentiles to *visit* His family, but that Gentiles are *brought into* His family by faith in Jesus—eventually leading to an *eternal environment* of *eternal living* with the redeemed.

II Ordinary People; Extraordinary Assignment

NKJV **Ephesians 3:7** “*Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. 8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints,*”

God’s grace *called* the apostle to the ministry—he was appointed by God and did not put himself in that position. God then equipped him and sent him to tell everyone they are loved; they have a choice—to repent and be forgiven; and then to become part of His family of true believers in Christ.

If they will make that decision to confess, repent of sins and unbelief, they will be accepted into His eternal Kingdom.

The apostle emphasizes the fact that anything he did, was only because of God's grace and power worked through him—

He was just an *ordinary* person **appointed** by God and **given** an *extraordinary* task of proclaiming God's grace to the world. We should never use human efforts to get into the ministry, but only when God calls us.

The apostle went from a *persecutor of the church* to a *preacher of the Gospel*—yet in God's mercy, the apostle was appointed the privilege of telling about 8 "*the unsearchable riches of Christ*."

We can study the Bible for a lifetime and still learn more about "*the unsearchable riches of Christ*."

The devil wants us to think: *I don't know enough about the Bible—How could I help anyone?*

But the apostle says that spiritual truth does not depend on *us* but on *God's mercy, love, and power*. Grace doesn't call the *qualified*—it *qualifies* the called.

III Grace Worth Sharing

Ephesians 3:8b "*This grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,*

9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages [world AV] has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ." *See John 1:3-5

The apostle says—NLT 9 "*I was chosen to explain to everyone this plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning.*"

It is no longer a mystery—when God's grace changes our life—our *ways, words, and desires* change also—we must then **live** that truth so the world can *see, hear, and be inspired* to live like that.

Ephesians 3:10 "*To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,*

11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,"

Our *daily behavior* should be a *living testimony* of God's goodness and grace. Wherever we are and whomever we interact with should *see, hear, and recognize* that we are **different** from the **darkness** in the world.

Ephesians 3:12 "*in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.*

13 Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart [faint not] at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."

The mystery has been revealed—we are no longer *outside* His family of believers—we are *inside* His house of believers though faith in His Son Jesus.

We are given an inheritance as members of His household and share in the same promises.

It was an amazing privilege given to the apostle of proclaiming this grace to the world—yet the apostle did not boast about this, but humbly admitted he was just a messenger, a servant, and the least of all other apostles.

He actually marveled that God would choose and use him at all.

The apostle was proclaiming the *unsearchable riches of Christ*—riches so *great* that we can spend a lifetime exploring them and never exhaust them.

His teaching was that **Grace Builds Bridges**—and it takes us from **Dark to Different** from **lost to saved**.

Grace removes the wall—we are one body of all true repentant believers everywhere; we all have a *shared inheritance* and a *common purpose*—trust God, keep the faith, and don't look back or go back to the rebellion and unbelief of the world.

Therefore, we must live in a way that God's grace constantly points to the inexhaustible *riches [and endless treasure] of Christ*.



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