



The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leader:

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Glory of God in the Church
A Study in Ephesians

Date	Lesson	Text
08/30	Introduction	
09/06	In Christ	1:1-14
09/13	Providing Hope	1:15-23
09/20	Providing Grace Pt 1	2:1-10
09/27	Providing Grace Pt 2	2:11-21
10/04	In Revelation	3:1-21
10/11	Empowering Conduct	4:1-16
10/18	Bro. Smarto	
10/25	Bro. Smarto	
11/01	Putting Off Old Self	4:17-32
11/08	Living as Lights	5:1-21
11/15	In Submission	6:1-9
11/22	In Victory	6:10-24
11/29	THANKSGIVING	
12/06	Summary & Review	

Food for Thought

Revelation And Response

The Lord reveals Himself to you
In many different ways;
So don't reject and turn away;
Instead, give Him your praise
Sooner or later you'll
have to face God.

See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?

Heb 12:25 (NIV)

(From "Our Daily Bread" Nov 19, 1995)

Glory of God: In Revelation

Eph 3:1-21

The third chapter of Ephesians is dominated by three dominant themes: (1) Paul's prayers; (2) Paul's imprisonment; and, (3) Paul's calling. Paul's prayers were a reflection of the divine purpose of God and His provision in Jesus Christ. His prayers were not for himself, but for Gentile believers. He prayed for those whom he would have tortured or put to death before his conversion, he now prays for as an apostle. What a marvelous conversion Paul's salvation was. **And when Paul prayed for the Ephesian saints, it was for their spiritual growth, not for their physical and material well-being.** He prayed for what God purposed in the lives of His elect. Paul's calling was, first and foremost, to become a believer in Jesus Christ. His conversion delivered him from the condemnation which he rightly deserved as a self-righteous Pharisee, making him an unworthy soul saved by grace (see Philippians 3:1-16; 1 Timothy 1:12-17). Beyond this, Paul's calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles (see Romans 1:5; Galatians 2:9). **In addition, Paul's calling was to proclaim the mystery which was not fully disclosed in the Old Testament, and which the Jews so strongly opposed. This mystery was that of the gospel, that in Jesus Christ Jews and Gentiles would be reconciled to God and to each other, not as two different categories of Christian, but as "one new man," as "one body" in Christ.** In chapter 1, Paul spoke of the gospel as a "mystery," as the "summing up of all things in Christ" (1:9-10). In chapter 2, the term "mystery" is not used, but it is a prominent theme in chapter 3. While God had clearly revealed the fact that He purposed to save and to bless both Jews and Gentiles through the seed of Abraham, it was not revealed that this would be accomplished in such a way as to make Jewish and Gentile saints one in Christ and to unite them in the church, the body of Christ. This was indeed a mystery which no Old Testament saint or prophet anticipated. No wonder that the Jewish apostles required some time to grasp this fact and to see it as a vital part of the gospel.

As I have reflected on this **"mysterious" dimension of the gospel**, I have concluded that it is a significant truth which many Christians (including myself) have failed to understand and appreciate. Let me focus our attention on **the mysterious element of our Christian faith.**

1. The gospel is mysterious (Colossians 1:24-29)
2. All spiritual truth is mysterious (1 Corinthians 2:6-13)
3. Christianity is mysterious because God is mysterious (Romans 9:17)
4. The Christian life is mysterious because God has chosen to reveal Himself and His purposes progressively (1 Corinthians 13:9-12)
5. The Christian life is mysterious because there is much going on of which we are ignorant, which is beyond the scope of our knowledge and understanding (see Hebrews 11:1)
6. The Christian faith must therefore rest on divine revelation, not on human reasoning (Romans 3:9-18)
7. Even the revealed Word of God is beyond the grasp of man's understanding, apart from divine illumination of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:11-16; John 16:7-14)

There are several implications to this mysterious nature of God's dealings with His creation.

Let me close with several of them for you to consider.

1. If God and His working is mysterious, then we should expect that there will be much we do not understand.
2. We should not focus our attention on the things which God has chosen to conceal, but rather endeavor to understand and obey what He has clearly revealed to us in His Word.
3. We should expect to live by faith, not by sight, in obedience to the Word of God, as illuminated by the Spirit of God.
4. We should not be as intent to know the particulars of God's plan as we are to understand the overall plan and purpose of God as He has revealed it, and to live in a way that is consistent with that plan.
5. If the angels are being instructed by the conduct and the practice of the church, it is imperative that we obey God's imperatives for the church, whether we understand and agree with them or not.
6. Finally, if God's ways are a mystery to men, which men will not arrive at through their own reasoning, we should be diligent to faithfully proclaim the Word of Truth, the good news of the gospel, to those who are perishing.

(Excerpt from "Ephesians: The Glory of God in the Church" by Robert L. Deffinbaugh)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

THE RECEPTION OF THE REVELATION (EPH 3:1-4)

Reception of grace (1-2)

- Grace that provides salvation to all men (Titus 2:11)
- Grace that is a reason to rejoice and have hope (Rom 5:1-2)
- Grace that overflows (Rom 5:15)
- Grace that is sufficient (2 Cor 12:9)
- Grace that is God's will and pleasure (Eph 1:5-6)
- Grace through mercy (1 Tim 1:13-14)
- Grace through justification (Titus 3:3-7)

Reception through insight (3-4)

- Recognized as God through spiritual insight (Jer 24:7)
- If I call out to God for insight and discernment (Ps 25:4-5)
- Justice that comes from insight (Ps 119:98-100)
- The understanding of the fear of God is obtained with I pray for insight and seek it with all my heart (Prov 2:3-5)
- Discernment based on the knowledge and insight given by God (Phil 1:9-10)

THE NATURE OF THE REVELATION (EPH 3:5-6)

Nature of God's timing (5)

- God's timing is different because of His superior ways and authority (Isa 55:8-9)
- God's timing is different because He is not limited by time (2 Pet 3:8)
- There is a time for everything, but all of it is up to God (Eccl 3:1)
- God does things when the time has fully come (Gal 4:4)
- It is not for man to know God's timing (Acts 1:7)
- God's timing that is always at the right time (Rom 5:6)
- God's timing where God always has a chosen remnant (Rom 11:5)
- God's timing that is according to God's good pleasure (Eph 1:8-10)

Nature of fellow heirs (6)

- Heirs because of overcoming the world (Rev 21:7)
- Heirs through faith (Rom 4:13)
- Heirs through the gospel (Eph 3:6)
- Heirs having the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-7)
- Heirs that have the oath of God (Heb 6:16-18)
- Heirs because of receiving a Spirit of sonship (Rom 8:14-17)

THE PREACHING OF THE REVELATION (EPH 3:7-9)

Preaching about the gift of God's grace (7-8)

- Gift of grace for a remnant chosen by God (Rom 11:5)
- Gift of grace that result in blessing after blessing (John 1:16)
- Gift of grace from the God of all grace (1 Peter 5:10)
- Gift of grace to teach (Rom 12:5-7)
- Gift of grace given to God's people (Rom 5:15)
- Gift of grace that is incomparable (Eph 2:7-9)

Preaching about fellowship (9)

- A fellowship that is steadfast (Acts 2:40-43)
- A fellowship with the Holy Spirit (Phil 2:1-4)
- A fellowship through righteousness (1 John 1:3-7)
- A fellowship that is based on love and obedience (John 14:23)

A fellowship that make me complete (2 Cor 13:11)

A fellowship that makes me sanctified (2 Cor 6:16-17)

THE PURPOSE OF THE REVELATION (EPH 3:10-13)

Purpose of the wisdom of God revealed (10-11)

- Wisdom of God because He gives it generously (James 1:5)
- Wisdom of God that comes from God's word and obedience to it (Deut 4:5-6)
- Wisdom of God because God can fill with all knowledge, wisdom and understanding (Col 1:9)
- Wisdom of God that teaches to number our days (Ps 90:12)
- Wisdom of God because it is a blessing (Prov 3:13)
- Wisdom of God because it is magnificent (Isa 28:29)
- Wisdom of God that founded the world (Jer 10:12)
- Wisdom of God that comes from Heaven (James 3:17)

Purpose of encouragement to the saints (12-13)

- Encouragement during affliction (Ps 10:17-18)
- Encouragement that leads to unity (Rom 15:5)
- Encouragement from being united with Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Phil 2:1)
- Encouragement that is eternal (2 Thess 2:16)
- Encouragement because of the show of faith (Matt 9:2)
- Encouragement through the Bible (Rom 15:4)
- Encouragement that leads to loving and doing good deeds (Heb 10:24)
- Encouragement that builds up (1 Thess 5:11)

THE PRAYING ABOUT THE REVELATION (EPH 3:14-22)

Praying about inner strengthening (14-16)

- Strength that God provides (1 Peter 4:11)
- Strength that God arms us with (Ps 18:32)
- Strength because God is with us wherever we go (Josh 1:9)
- Strength through our weakness (2 Cor 13:4)
- Strength in God's mighty power (Eph 6:10)

Praying about steadfast faith (17)

- Steadfast faith is relying on God regardless of the circumstances (2 Cor 1:8-9)
- Steadfast faith is keeping the faith to the finish (2 Tim 4:7)
- Steadfast faith is faith and actions working together to make faith complete (James 2:22)
- Steadfast faith is throwing off everything that hinders (Heb 12:1)

Praying about the love of God (18-19)

- Love of God because nothing can separate it from us (Rom 8:37-39)
- Love of God to persevere (2 Thess 3:5)
- Love of God through obedience (John 15:9-10)
- Love of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:15-18)

Praying about God's power (20-22)

- God's power is great and awesome (Deut 7:21)
- God's power should cause the fear of God (Josh 4:24)
- God's power is mighty (Ps 147:5)
- God's power cannot be turned back (Isa 14:27)