

Ephesians

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The revealing of the mystery

Ephesians 3 : 1 - 9

1 I, Paul, am a prisoner because of Christ Jesus. I am in prison because of my work among you who are Gentiles.

2 I am sure you have heard that God appointed me to share his grace with you. 3 I'm talking about the mystery God showed me. I have already written a little about it. 4 By reading about this mystery, you will be able to understand what I know. You will know about the mystery of Christ. 5 The mystery was not made known to people of other times. But now the Holy Spirit has made this mystery known to God's holy apostles and prophets. 6 Here is the mystery. Because of the good news, God's promises are for Gentiles as well as for Jews. Both groups are parts of one body. They share in the promise. It belongs to them because they belong to Christ Jesus. 7 I now serve the good news because God gave me his grace. His power is at work in me. 8 I am by far the least important of all the Lord's holy people. But he gave me the grace to preach to the Gentiles about the unlimited riches that Christ gives. 9 God told me to make clear to everyone how the mystery came about. In times past it was kept hidden in the mind of God, who created all things.

1 I, Paul, am a prisoner because of Christ Jesus. I am in prison because of my work among you who are Gentiles. 2 I am sure you have heard that God appointed me to share his grace with you.

Exercise : Read Acts 21 : 27 - 36

Q : What strikes you about this passage? What was the fundamental accusation against Paul that caused him to be cast into prison?

3 I'm talking about the mystery God showed me. I have already written a little about it. 4 By reading about this mystery, you will be able to understand what I know. You will know about the mystery of Christ. 5 The mystery was not made known to people of other times. But now the Holy Spirit has made this mystery known to God's holy apostles and prophets.

Q : Why was Paul so clearly able to see that gentiles would come to covenant by faith in Christ alone while the other apostles, like Peter, struggled along time to see it? What does this tell us about our own journey of revelation regarding salvation by faith?

6 Here is the mystery. Because of the good news, God's promises are for Gentiles as well as for Jews. Both groups are parts of one body. They share in the promise. It belongs to them because they belong to Christ Jesus.

Q : How has this teaching in Ephesians helped you understand how radical the gospel message is? What reservations or caveats do you still want to put on "salvation by faith alone"?

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Q : What, if any, is the difference between preaching the gospel versus making the gospel clear?

Q : What is the correlation between a revelatory understanding of salvation and our zeal to share the gospel? What else impedes our zeal to share the gospel?