



Becoming a People Who... Live for a Change "in Him"

The Mystery, The Mission, & the Motivation

Message Notes, January 27, 2019

Ephesians 3:1-21

For the next 4 weeks we will be in a sub-series: ***Live for a Change***. We will be examining the book of Ephesians – Paul’s pastoral letter to the 10-yr-old church at Ephesus that he himself began.

At this point in his letter, Paul is about to pray for his beloved Gentile flock (3:1), but he takes a long tangent (vs 3:2-13)

- **:1-6** He reminds them of “the administration of God’s grace” in his own life - - his conversion story:
 - He, a persecutor of Christ-followers, is knocked off his donkey on the road to Damascus, struck blind, and sent to Ananias who tells him Jesus’ purpose – “This man (Saul) is my chosen instrument to carry my name *before the Gentiles*.” (Acts 9:15)

The MYSTERY: Saul (who becomes Paul) is the messenger of “the mystery of Christ ... that through the gospel, the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel.” (:4b, 6...

- a) Heirs: They now share in the gift of the riches of God.
- b) Members: They are now part of the ONE body of faith.
- c) Sharers: in the (covenant) promise of God in Christ (Grace, Forgiveness, Love, and Acceptance).
- The exclusivity of Israel is now dissolved. The requirements of Jewish law and sacrifices are abolished.
- ALL are invited in (through faith). Romans 10:12-13 Galatians 3:26-29
- **:7-9** Paul’s conversion and calling are by “the working of His **power**” (*dynamis* – root for dynamite!)
 - God’s forceful, transforming power in his life “to preach to the Gentiles the boundless **riches of Christ**” – *boundless*, unfathomable, greater than we can grasp, and what are these riches?
 - a) “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3)
 - b) the very nature and attributes of Christ (holiness, love, compassion, wisdom, kindness, truth, . . .)
 - c) the saving work of Christ grace, forgiveness, redemption)

Paul is declaring how he has been called to make this mystery and these riches known.

The MISSION: Not just for Paul but for the Church

:10-13 “Now, **through the Church**, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known - to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms” - the angels rejoice; the demons shudder . . .

When we, the Church, live in our purpose - when we shine his light, proclaim his truth, share his love, we “make known His manifold wisdom” (eternal purpose).

:14-17 Paul finally leaves his “tangent” and gets back to his original intent of prayer . . .
“I **kneel** (*in humility and fervent intercession*) before the Father, from whom every family...derives its **name** (*we all share in the ONE name of our ONE heavenly Father*), that He may strengthen you in your **inner being** (*that deep, soulful place where we wrestle with fears, suffer through pain, sort out tough decisions, face our failures*), so that Christ may **dwell** in your hearts (*be intimate and at home in you*).

:17-19 “I pray you will be **rooted** (*like a plant with deep roots that nurture life*) and **established** (*like a building on a strong, unshakable foundation*) in LOVE.”

The MOTIVATION: The immeasurable, boundless, “wide & high & long & deep - love of Christ” So huge and unfathomable, I pray you “may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp [it].”

- A love, so pure and glorious, it “**surpasses knowledge**” (*so much more than intellectual assent*). I pray you will “**know** this love” (*experientially, deep in your heart, in your soul*) .

This “overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God” (song quote)

“God, reveal your love to us. Holy Spirit, help us to KNOW it! It is your deep, unconditional love that will **MOTIVATE** us in our **MISSION** of making known the **MYSTERY** of the riches of your grace for all.”

:20-21 Paul’s prayer benediction. No commentary is needed.