

# EPHESIANS

## Bible Study 3:1-13

Questions will be posed and space will be allowed for a written response. Make every effort to answer the questions before looking below for the answer. **The answers will be in bold print at the end of the “questions” section.**

Paul the Preacher to the Gentiles – 3:1-13:

Having saved people individually by his grace (2:1–10), and having reconciled them to each other as well as to himself through the sacrificial death of Christ (2:11–22), God also now unites them on an equal basis in one body, the church. This step in God’s eternal plan was not fully revealed in previous times. Paul calls it a “mystery.” (CSB)

The Early Church, surprisingly, did not universally approve of the mission to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 15). Paul urges that Christ Himself commissioned him to fulfill God’s plan to bring the Gentiles the message of salvation through faith apart from works. (TLSB)

The previous paragraph explains verse 1. Paul became a prisoner because he took the Gospel to the Gentiles. Jewish accusers who were opposed to the Gospel and especially any efforts to incorporate the Gentiles were responsible for Paul’s arrest.

1. In verses 2-6 Paul repeatedly refers to a mystery. In the Bible a mystery is something once unknown and now revealed by God. In verse 6 he identifies this mystery. What is it? Why is this mystery important to you personally?
2. In 3:7 we see that Paul’s commission to take the Gospel to the Gentiles involved risk and hardship for him. What enabled him to carry out this commission?
3. The “unsearchable riches of Christ.” (v. 8) are far beyond what we can know, but not beyond our appreciation. The riches of Christ are so vast that they cannot be mapped out or measured. No one can ever exhaust the depths of the Gospel in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Think back to chapter 1. What were some spiritual riches you can recall? Why is it good to recall these riches often?
4. “Through the church.” (V. 10) God had done the seemingly impossible—reconciling and uniting Jews and Gentiles in the church. This makes the church the perfect means of displaying God’s wisdom. In addition to worship services, how can the church connect caringly and share God’s message of forgiveness?
5. Verse 12 tells us that we can approach God with “freedom and confidence.” What are some assurances you can think of that would have you freely and confidently approach God?

6. In verse 13 Paul asks that his imprisonment not discourage them in their faith. What are some examples from Scripture and world events that show that God is control?
7. What is your favorite verse/phrase in this section?

**Some Answers to the above Questions:**

1. Verse 6 clearly explains what that mystery is that Paul is talking about.

**A word of caution is in order so that we don't misunderstand Paul's words and jump to the conclusion that Gentiles couldn't be saved or that God wasn't interested in them during OT times. Recall that God through the OT prophet Ezekiel said, "As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live" (33:11). These words applied to Gentiles as well as Jews.**

**OT Israel was to be a kingdom of priests that shared God's saving grace. Except for rare occasions, they did not get the job done.**

**We are Gentiles. This mystery is important in that if it had not been passed on we would not have saving knowledge. We would be eternally lost.**

2. Paul sees grace bringing him the power necessary to preach the Gospel. Grace also equips us for ministry.

**The transforming greatness of God's power and might is effective both in those who preach and in those who hear and believe the Gospel. 1:19."**

3. See how many of the chapter 1 spiritual riches you can remember before looking at chapter 1.

**These riches are incredibly unfathomable. Thinking about them only once in-while will have us soon take them for granted. The more we remember them the more we will appreciate them. We can never get enough of these riches.**

4. We can care for people in our neighborhoods living out our faith. We can provide fellowship for people who show some interest in becoming connected to our church. We can invite people to come to Bible classes with us. Our church can make devotional materials available.

5. In praying the Lord's Prayer we are assured that we are God's children and He is our loving Father and we can come to Him with anything and everything. There also many

**Scripture situations where God's leaders came to Him and were not disappointed. Jesus frequently prayed to the Father.**

**6. God promised that a Savior would come to die for the sins of the whole world. God protected and guided that plan until the time Christ died and rose again. God also protected the early church and helped it to grow.**

**Leaders like Hitler, Stalin and others have tried to suppress Christianity in the past. They did not succeed. The devil is using "political correctness" to undermine the Church and promote evil behavior in American society. He will not win. Today radical Islam is threatening Christianity around the world. It, too, will not succeed.**