**Ephesians Chapter 3**

VS 1-2

* Paul writes as a prisoner of Christ for the Gentiles.
* Paul was accused of bringing a Gentile into the Temple (Acts21:29).
* Paul plead his case before Governor Felix and King Agrippa.
* Paul never had a criminal charge against him (violation of Jewish law).
* Paul was imprisoned in Rome after he appealed to Caesar.
* Paul wrote Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians from prison.

**Dispensation of Grace – there are Seven Dispensations**.

1. Innocence – Garden before the Fall.
2. Conscience – knowing good and evil – Moral Responsibility (Cain/Able).
3. Human Government – Tower of Babel – Nimrod – dispersed by God.
4. Promise – Abraham through to bondage in Egypt.
5. Law – Moses, Exodus to Captivity in Babylon 586 BC.
6. Church – GRACE – Pentecost through 2nd Coming of Jesus.
7. Kingdom – Revelation 20, 21, 22; Satan Bound, Millenium Reign, New Heaven/Earth.

Paul was chosen for this ministry – Acts 9: 15-16

**VS 3 – 7; The Mystery of Christ**

* Hidden and not revealed until now.
* Not made know in the OT.
* Now revealed through the apostles and prophets.
* Gentiles are fellow heirs with the Jews.
* Gentiles are part of the same body.
* Gentiles are partakers of the promise of Christ through the gospel.
* Paul’s ministry is “grace driven” and empowered by His power (Holy Spirit).
* Three Groups of People
	+ Jews
	+ Gentiles
	+ Christians (Believing Jews + Christians = Body of Christ).
* Peter in Acts 10 – Gentile Pentecost.
* Paul Call as a Missionary to the Gentiles – Acts 9
* Council in Jerusalem – Acts 15 – what are we to require of the Gentiles?

**The Kingdom of Heaven – Twelves**

* 12 Tribes
* 12 Apostles
* 12 Kingdom Parables (all from Matthew)
	+ Sower and the Seed
	+ Tares and Wheat
	+ Mustard Seed
	+ Woman and Leaven
	+ Treasure in the Field
	+ Pearl of Great Price
	+ Dragnet
	+ Forgiveness of Debts
	+ Latecomers equally paid.
	+ Guests at Marriage Feasts
	+ Ten Virgins
	+ Stewardship of Talents
* 12 Kingdom Mysteries
	+ Of the Kingdom of God (Luke 8:10; Mk 4:11)
	+ Of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt 13:11)
	+ Of the Manifestations of the Flesh (1 Tim 3:16)
	+ Of Salvation by Faith (Ephesians 3:9)
	+ Of Ultimate Unity (Ephesians 1:9)
	+ Of the Gentiles in the Same Body as the Jews (Eph 3:3)
	+ Of the Bride of Christ (Eph 5:10)
	+ Of the Rapture (1 Thes 4: 12-18)
	+ Of Iniquity (2 Thess 2: 6-12)
	+ Of the Seven Churches (Rev 1:20)
	+ Of Israel’s Partial Blindness (Rom 11:25)
	+ Mystery Babylon (Counterfeit Kingdom) Rev 17 and 18.
* 12.000 from each Tribe sealed in the Book of Revelation (144,000).
* New Jerusalem – 12 gates, 12 foundation stones, 12,000 furlongs (1,500 miles).

**The Jews – Three offers of the Kingdom – Rejected**

* John the Baptist – Matthew 3:2 – John rejected, later beheaded.
* Jesus’ Ministry Among the Jews – Pharisee’s rejected Him – Crucified by Pilate.
* Apostle’s Witness After the Resurrection – Peter imprisoned, Stephen stoned, etc.

VS 8 – 11

* Paul the least of the apostles – persecuted the church, stoned Stephen.
* Paul granted to preach the “unfathomable” riches of Christ (God uses flawed vessels).
* Paul reveals God eternal purpose to reconcile Jews and Gentiles into one body.
* This is an astonishing thing to the angels, principalities, and powers in heavenly places.
* This revelation and wisdom are manifest through the CHURCH.
* This is not an afterthought, but the eternal purpose of God.
	+ The incarnation
	+ The death of Jesus
	+ The burial of Jesus
	+ The resurrection of Jesus
	+ The ascension if Jesus
	+ The glorification of Jesus
* God hid this from Satan: 1 Corinthians 2:8

VS 12-13 – we have boldness and access to the Father by faith.

VS 14 – 21 – Paul’s Second Prayer.

* Bow my knees before the **FATHER.**
* To be strengthened by the **SPIRIT** in the inner man – your spirit (dead or alive).
* **CHRIST** to dwell in our hearts by faith.
* That we be rooted and grounded in love.
* To comprehend
	+ Breadth – Extent of His Grace
	+ Length – From eternity to eternity.
	+ Depth – the Pit; our predicament, separated from God.
	+ Height – Join heirs with Christ, seated with Him in heavenly places.
* To know the love of God that passes all understanding.
* To be filled with all the fulness of God.
* God can do more than we can possibly ask or think because of His surpassing power.