

**Ephesians 3:1-3** - 3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — 2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

A. For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles – Here Paul speaks of his imprisonment in Rome. But what is profound about this is Paul's view of his circumstance. Rather than claiming to be a prisoner of Rome or Ceasar, Paul calls himself the “*prisoner of Christ.*” Paul saw the sovereign purpose of God in his imprisonment, and all this “*for the sake of you Gentiles.*” Would that we would all understand that our lives and circumstances are all under the direct and sovereign control of God and marvel at what purpose God must be working in our lives!

B. if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. – Paul again speaks of God's sovereign purpose in “*giving the stewardship*” to Paul. He saw himself as divinely called by God and gifted with a certain calling to fulfill. And all of this was done by the “*revelation of the mystery*” of God in Christ. Paul knew this was his commission from God and that he had no choice but to fulfill it, even if it meant chains and death. This was his glad sacrifice after all Christ had done in making Himself known to Paul.

**Romans 11:29** - 29 **for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.** NASB

**Ephesians 3:4-7** - 4 And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, 7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

A. understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; - Paul had tremendous insight into the kingdom of God which he received by direct revelation from Christ. The understanding of the gospel had been kept a mystery and secret for all the long ages past, but now it was revealed to Paul to preach it among every living creature. (Isa 49:6,52:10, Joel 2:28, Amos 9:12, Zech 2:11, Col 1:26, Rom 16:25) This was also revealed to the other Jewish apostles by revelation. Acts 10:11-16, 10:34-48, 11:15-18

**Galatians 1:11-17** - 11 For I would have you know, brethren, that **the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.** 13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure, and tried to destroy it; 14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. 15 But when He who had set me apart, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, **was pleased 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,** 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus. NASB

B. the mystery of Christ.... to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel – Here we see the *“mystery of Christ” spoken of specifically*. It is that now the Gentiles are fellow partakers in the promise of Christ. God has made the two (Jew and Gentile) into one. This is the mystery which Paul speaks of.

**Galatians 3:13-14** - 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" — 14 in order **that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles**, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. NASB

**Acts 11:18** - 18 And when they heard this, they quieted down, and glorified God, saying, "Well then, **God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.**" NASB

**Ephesians 3:8-9** - 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things;

A. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, - Here Paul is sure to give glory to God and in humility refer to himself properly. Although God had honored him with the stewardship of preaching the gospel to the Gentile world, he didn't hesitate to draw attention away from himself so that we could see Christ. Here is an example of true humility for our instruction. If Paul refers to himself in this manner, than how should we?

**1 Timothy 1:12-16** - 12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service; 13 **even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor**. And yet I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. 15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world **to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all**. 16 And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. NASB

B. to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; - Here again we see the RICHES of the grace of God in Christ! The magnitude of this statement is incomprehensible! Neither men nor angels can comprehend the tremendous providence of Almighty God in creating a universe and redeeming it from its sinful fallen state and delivering it to a glorious eternal kingdom of peace and joy forever! What words could describe such a thing? ***These RICHES are unfathomable!*** That means they are so rich and full that they cannot be comprehended. It was the preaching of this message or *“bringing to light”* that Paul was given, that now the Gentiles could become fellow heirs of all of the promises in the Messiah, Christ Jesus.

**Romans 11:33-36** - 33 Oh, **the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!** 34 For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? 35 Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. NASB