

Series: The Wealth and Walk of a Christian  
"The Mystery of the Church" # 10  
Eph. 3:1-13  
9-24-17 Sun AM

**TT:** Paul explains the mystery of the Church.

**I. The Dispensation of this Mystery [v. 2].**

1. Paul's mission [v. 2a].

Dispensation? Administration or stewardship of a trust to be dispensed. It can mean "commission."

Paul was to share this grace with the Gentiles as an apostle to the Gentiles [**Eph. 3:8; Gal. 2:7**].

1. Paul's mission [v. 2a].

2. Our mission

**Matt. 28:18-20**

**Acts 1:8-** The witness in Jerusalem (1-7) the witness to Judea and Samaria (8-9), and the witness to the ends of the earth (10-28).

**II. The Disclosing of this Mystery [vs. 3-5].**

1. How the mystery was given [v. 3].

Revelation hidden in O.T. and revealed to Paul by inspiration.

Two great passages on revelation are found in **1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-23**.

**Q- What is revelation?**

The act of God making Himself known to mankind (1405 B.C. - 95 A.D.).

2. God has revealed Himself in two ways:

*General revelation-* by creation (Rom 1:19-20; Ps 19:1). by conscience (Rom 2:14-15).

*Special revelation-* by the living Word (Heb 1:1-2). by the written Word (2 Tim 3:16a; 2 Peter 1:19-20).

**Q- What is inspiration?**

The means by which God's special revelation came to man. The process by which God breathed His Word to men, through the Holy Spirit, to write down and preserve forever.

Inspiration involves two truths:

*Verbal*- God gave the very words, not just the thoughts, yet keeping the writers style and personalities intact (1 Cor. 2:10, 12-13; 2 Tim 3:16a; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

*Plenary*- All the Bible is inspired, not just parts. It does not contain God's Word, but rather, it is God's Word.

**Q- What is illumination?**

The work of the Holy Spirit in opening our spiritual eyes to comprehend the meaning and application of God's Word.

2. The time this mystery was given [vs. 4-5].

(1). *This mystery was hidden in the O.T.* [v. 5a]. It was a sacred secret revealed or uncovered in the N.T. by the Spirit given to the Apostles and prophets? [Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 12:28; 14:29-32].

### **III. The Definition of this Mystery [v. 6].**

The mystery is that both believing Jews and Gentiles are joined together.

**IV. The Dispensing of this Mystery [vs. 7-13].** Paul having described the mystery, now Paul tells of the ministry of dispensing this mystery to the Gentiles.

1. How Paul was given this ministry [v. 7].

It was God's gift of grace [3:2], given to Paul by God's Power and continued by His power.

No person can make himself a minister or servant. The calling, the message, the work, the power, and gifts, all come from above.

2. How Paul viewed this ministry [v.8a].

The only true Biblical response to God's grace in salvation and service is a deep sense of humility as to our own unworthiness.

This is why serving the Lord is not a drudgery or a bore. I think people who serve in the flesh can be easily identified.

### 3. How Paul dispensed this ministry [vs. 8b-9]. “that I should”

(1). *Paul was to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ* [v.8b]. Warren Wiersbe says that it means “untraceable riches.” It refers again to the truth hidden in the O.T.

We can know a little of His grace and mercy, but we can never really understand the depth of his spiritual wealth- His blessings, all that he is and does.

(2). *Paul was to make plain to everyone this mystery* [v. 9].

This sacred secret was hid in God and thus hid to man in the O.T. [v. 5]. It was hidden in God’s mind before he ever created. It was all part of his sovereign Eternal plan [1:4, 11].

### 4. Paul’s purpose of the ministry [vs. 10-12]. “to the intent”

(1). *God wants to put the church on display to the angels* [v.10-12].

God’s wisdom in joining both Jews and Gentiles in one body. The angels learn about God’s grace thru the church. Our eternal purpose is to glorify God. We can come into his presence with Christ-confidence, not self-confidence.

(2). *The churches glory comes thru suffering* [v. 13].

Had Paul not took the gospel to the Jews he would not have suffered, and we would have no glory.

**Next Week-** We look at Paul’s prayer for spiritual strength. [vs. 14-21].