

## EPHESIANS 3



## 2 Main Divisions of Ephesians

1. Chs. 1-3—doctrine—what God wants you to know
2. Chs. 4-6—duties—how God wants you to walk in light of the doctrine just taught

## Ephesians 3 Overview

- 3:2-13—Paul’s ministry regarding the mystery
- 3:1, 14-19—Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians
- 3:20-21—Paul’s praise to God the Father, closing the first section of the book

## New Testament Mystery

- A divine truth once hidden but now revealed
- The “mystery of Christ . . . not made known to people in other generations as it is now revealed” (3:4-5)
- This particular mystery is “that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (3:6).

## God's Plan for the Gentiles in the OT

- “In you [Abraham] all the families of the earth will be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).
- “The Gentiles shall come to your light” (Isaiah 60:3).
- “I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles” (Isaiah 49:6).
- “Thus He will sprinkle many nations . . . ; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand” (Isaiah 52:15).
- My name shall be great among the Gentiles (Malachi 1:11).

## Paul Magnifies His Calling

- A servant of the gospel by the gift of God's grace & the working of His power (3:7)
- His ministry—to proclaim to the Gentiles the incalculable riches of Christ (3:8)
- His ministry—to shed light for all [including Jews] concerning the mystery (3:9)
- His ministry—to show God's manifold wisdom through the church to the heavenly beings (3:10)

## Paul, “the least of all the saints” (3:8)

- He persecuted the church of God (1 Cor. 15:9).
- He was “a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor” (1 Tim. 1:13).
- He said, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1 Tim. 1:13).
- He “tried to destroy” the church (Gal. 1:13; Acts 9:1).

## Paul, “the least of all the saints” (3:8)

- Since Paul said those things about himself under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we must accept them as true.
- The encouragement is that if God saved Paul and used him mightily in His service, He can and will certainly save and use us.

### **Ranks of Heavenly Beings (3:10)**

- “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him” (Colossians 1:16).
- Christ is “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come” (Eph. 1:21).

### **Ranks of Heavenly Beings (3:10)**

- These ranks appear to exist among both the unfallen and the fallen angels.
- “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).

### **Ranks of Heavenly Beings (3:10)**

- Michael and Gabriel are the only two unfallen angels named in the Bible.
- Gabriel is a messenger to Daniel (8:16), to Zechariah (Luke 1:19), and to Mary (Luke 1:26-27).
- Michael is “one of the chief princes” (Dan. 10:13); he is also an “archangel” (Jude 1:9) and “the great prince who stands guard over” Israel (Dan. 12:1).

### **Ranks of Heavenly Beings (3:10)**

- The interesting thing about the angels (or heavenly beings) in Eph. 3:10-11 is that God is revealing His multi-faceted wisdom to them through the church.
- Doing so has been His “eternal purpose accomplished in Christ Jesus.”
- 1 Peter 1:12 says that angels “desire to look into these things”—regarding the OT prophecies about the Messiah & their fulfillment.

In Christ “you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22).  
“For this reason I kneel before the Father”  
(Eph. 3:14)



## Theme of Ephesians

*What God is doing  
in the Church  
through Christ  
for His own glory  
forever*

### Paul prays for his readers to possess

- Blessings from all three members of the Godhead:
  - The strength of the Spirit (3:16)
  - The indwelling of Christ (3:17)
  - The fullness of God (3:19)

### The Dimensions of God’s Love

- **wide** enough to reach the whole world and beyond (1:9, 10, 20)
- **long** enough to stretch from eternity to eternity (1:4–6, 18; 3:9)
- **high** enough to raise both Gentiles and Jews to heavenly places in Christ Jesus (1:13; 2:6)
- **deep** enough to rescue people from sin’s degradation and even from the grip of Satan himself (2:1–5; 6:11, 12)

### **Ephesians 3:20–21**

- Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,
- to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.