

Study Notes For Ephesians

(Chapter Three)

Ephesians 3:1 –

- “For this cause” ties backward to the previous statements of Paul (**Ephesians 2:19-22**).
- For the sake of the body of Christ (**Colossians 1:24**).
- Paul was literally, and often, a prisoner for the cause of Christ (**Acts 26:29, Acts 28:17, II Corinthians 11:23, Philippians 1:12-13, Colossians 4:18, II Timothy 1:8; II Timothy 1:16-17**, etc.; cf. **Luke 21:12**).
- Much of this was because of Paul’s works among the Gentiles (**I Thessalonians 2:14-16**).

Ephesians 3:2 –

- “If ye have heard” should not be understood as a necessary inference that they may not have heard of Paul’s work toward them. Reason being, similar language is used later (**Ephesians 4:21**) of things that they had to have heard and did hear to be Christians in the first place (**Acts 19:1-7** and **Ephesians 1:13**).
- Paul’s work was focused, though not solely (**Acts 18:4-8** and **Romans 1:5**), on the Gentiles (**Acts 9:15, Acts 22:21, Romans 11:13, Romans 15:15-16, Galatians 2:9**, and **II Timothy 1:11**).

Ephesians 3:3 –

- Paul knew what He knew by DIRECT revelation (**II Samuel 23:2, Jeremiah 1:9, John 14:26, John 16:13**, and **Galatians 1:10-12**).
- Paul then wrote what the Lord revealed (**I Corinthians 14:37** and **II Timothy 3:16-17**).
- “As I wrote afore” shows us that Paul expected them to read something he had written before. Whether that is an epistle we do not have or one written to others to be shared (**Colossians 4:16, I Thessalonians 5:27**, and **Revelation 1:3-11**), I cannot tell. Could have even been words written already in this Epistle concerning Gentiles being saved, of the same body, etc.
 - We do not have some books that were written (i.e. **Numbers 21:14, Joshua 10:13, II Samuel 1:18, I Kings 11:41, I Chronicles 29:29, II Chronicles 9:29, II Chronicles 12:15, II Chronicles 20:34, Esther 10:2, Jude 1:14**).
 - Of certain, we do not have a full record of everything that happened to Jesus (**John 20:30-31** and **John 21:24-25**).
 - Note of caution here, don’t be alarmed that there are things that were written that we do not have. We know we will not be accountable for something we have no access to (**John 15:22** and **James 4:17**).

Ephesians 3:4 –

- The word of God can be read (**Deuteronomy 17:13-20, John 5:39, Acts 17:10-11**, and **I Timothy 4:13**).

- The word of God can be understood (**Psalms 119:97-105, Nehemiah 8:3, and II Timothy 2:7**).
- That doesn't mean it is always easy to understand (**II Peter 3:15-18**). That is why great caution has to be used (**II Timothy 2:14-18**).
- Sometimes help from the faithful is needed (**Nehemiah 8:8 and Acts 8:24-39**).
 - Caution needs to be applied when choosing whom to listen to (**I John 4:1**).
 - Not everyone, whom has SOME of the truth, is of the truth (**Matthew 7:15-20**).
 - Look at more than just the words of teachers, look at their lives (**I Timothy 4:16**).
- Understanding is necessary (**Matthew 13:19 and Ephesians 5:17**), and is a choice (**John 8:43 and II Corinthians 3:12-16**).
- A key in understanding is honestly (**II Corinthians 4:2**) rightly dividing the word of truth (**II Timothy 2:14-18**).
- The mystery was being unveiled (**I Corinthians 2:6-7, Colossians 1:26-27, Colossians 3:2-4, I Timothy 3:9, and I Timothy 3:15-16**).

Ephesians 3:5 –

- God's plan was hidden in the past (**Isaiah 64:4, Matthew 13:16-17, Luke 10:24 and I Peter 1:3-12**; cf. **Hebrews 11:13**).
- Now revealed by the Apostles and prophets (**Mark 4:10-11 and Romans 16:25-26**).
- Revealed to them by the Spirit (**I Corinthians 2:9-13**).
- Simply put, things have to be brought to light (**II Timothy 1:9-10**).

Ephesians 3:6 –

- The mystery unveiled – Gentiles should be fellowheirs (**Isaiah 11:1-10, Isaiah 49:1-6, Romans 3:29, Romans 15:16, Galatians 3:14, and Galatians 3:26-29**).
- The mystery unveiled – Gentiles should be of the same body (**Colossians 3:11-15**).
- The mystery unveiled – Gentiles should be partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel (**Mark 16:15-16, Acts 10:1-11:18, Acts 15:7-8, and Romans 1:16**).

Ephesians 3:7 –

- As we've discussed already in this chapter (**Ephesians 3:2**), Paul had a focus on the Gentiles in his work for the Lord (**I Timothy 2:7 and II Timothy 4:17**).
- Paul was "made" a minister (**II Corinthians 3:5-6, Colossians 1:23, and Colossians 1:25**).
- The term "minister" [Strong's # 1249] means "servant" (**Matthew 23:11 and John 12:26**). It is not a "title" nor does it apply only to those who teach the Gospel (**Romans 16:1-2**). In fact, the same Greek word is also translated as "deacon" (**I Timothy 3:8**). We know Paul was not a deacon (**I Timothy 3:12**; cf. **I Corinthians 7:6-9**).

- The gift of God given by the effectual working of God's power (**Romans 15:18-19** and **Galatians 2:8**).

Ephesians 3:8 –

- Because of his past, Paul felt of himself that he was the least of all saints and credits the grace of God for what he is (**Galatians 1:13-17**, **I Corinthians 15:9-10**, and **I Timothy 1:12-16**).
- Paul preached the unsearchable riches of Christ, which applies in a sense of God's mind being so much greater than ours (**Romans 11:33-36**). It DOES NOT apply in the common idea of "we cannot grasp what God is or has done for our salvation" (**I Corinthians 2:9-13**).
- God made know these riches (**Colossians 1:27**).

Ephesians 3:9 –

- To make all men see (**Matthew 28:19**, **Luke 24:47**, **Mark 16:15-16**, and **Romans 16:26**).
- The fellowship [sharing] in the mystery or rather the benefits of the revelation of the mystery (i.e. **Romans 12:5** and **I Corinthians 12:13**). This is the heart of the contextual point. The mystery unveiled is salvation for all (cf. **Titus 2:11**).
- Which was hidden from the beginning of the world (**I Corinthians 2:7** and **Colossians 1:26**), but now is revealed (**Titus 1:1-3** and **I Peter 1:20**; cf. **II Timothy 1:8-9**).
- God created all things by Jesus Christ (**John 1:1-3**, **I Corinthians 8:6**, **Colossians 1:12-17**, and **Hebrews 1:1-2**).

Ephesians 3:10 –

- The principalities and powers discussed in this verse are those "in heavenly places" (cf. **Ephesians 1:21**). The distinction is necessary not to miss nor wrongly apply. There are principalities and powers on earth too (**Titus 3:1**).
- This is a clear point showing us that, even in the Heavenly realm, God reveals what He wants to whom He wants to reveal those things (**Matthew 24:35-36** and **I Peter 1:9-12**).
- The angels are very interested in our salvation (**Luke 15:10**).
- The existence of the church shows the manifold wisdom of God in that He created a vessel [so to speak] to spiritually unite all of the saved (**Acts 2:47** and **Hebrews 12:22-23**).
 - Consider how the plans of God came into fruition when the church was established (**Isaiah 2:2-3**, **Daniel 2:31-45**, and **Micah 4:1-2**; cf. **Acts 2:1-47**).

Ephesians 3:11 –

- God's eternal purpose is to restore/save mankind (**I Timothy 2:1-4**, **I Peter 5:10**, **II Peter 1:1-4**, and **II Peter 3:7-9**).
- That purpose has come to be in Christ (**John 6:40**, **John 10:10**, **John 20:30-31**, **Romans 6:23**, and **I John 5:11**).

Ephesians 3:12 –

- Boldness in accessing the Father comes through (**Ephesians 5:20, Colossians 3:17, and I John 2:1-2**) Christ (**Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 10:15-20, and Hebrews 13:5-6**).
- Access to the Father comes through Christ (**John 14:6, I Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 9:24, I Peter 2:5, and I Peter 3:18**).
- That access must be coupled with confidence (**I John 5:13-15**) by faith (**Romans 5:1-2**).
- Think about how faith ties to confidence (**Hebrews 11:7-16**).
 - However, confidence is not always rooted in faith (**Romans 10:1-3**).
 - We also cannot allow confidence to become arrogance (**Isaiah 13:11**) or pride (**James 4:6-10**).

Ephesians 3:13 –

- Paul was willing to suffer for brethren (**II Corinthians 1:3-7 and Colossians 1:23-24**).
- He did not want his suffering for them to hinder them (**I Thessalonians 2:1-3:8**).
- His sufferings were for their glory. That is, in the sense of their receiving of eternal glory (**II Timothy 2:10**).
- This mindset of Paul is exactly what all servants of the Almighty should have toward suffering for brethren without any bad feeling toward them for such (**John 15:12-13, Romans 15:1-3, and II Corinthians 4:14-15**).

Ephesians 3:14 –

- Paul prayed relative to his sufferings for the brethren, but be sure it was not a prayer for such to cease (**Romans 8:17, Philippians 1:29-30, Philippians 4:12-13, II Timothy 2:12, and II Timothy 3:12**).
- In fact, Paul would be thankful to suffer (**Luke 6:22-23, Acts 5:40-41, Romans 5:3, and I Peter 4:13**).
- To settle any questions to this, consider these two references (**II Corinthians 12:9-10 and II Timothy 1:12**).
- He would not want them to be held accountable for that, even if they were to blame (**Acts 7:51-60 and II Timothy 4:14-16**).
- As we get down later in this context (**Ephesians 3:16-17**), we will see his concern in his prayer for their staying strong (**Mark 13:13**).

Ephesians 3:15 –

- The whole family in Heaven and earth (**Ephesians 1:9-10 and Hebrews 12:22-23**) is named after Christ (**Acts 4:10-12**). For further thought, consider **Revelation 3:11-12**; cf. **John 10:30**.
- The expression of one family is certainly one that we can understand as being the kingdom (**Colossians 1:12-13, I Thessalonians 2:12, Hebrews 12:28, and Revelation 1:9**).
- The expression of one family also is a great point in discussion the relationship of followers of the Lord (**Matthew 12:46-50**).

- Fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters in the body (**Matthew 23:8** and **I Timothy 5:1-2**).
- Real love and affection as members of a family (**I Peter 1:22**, **I Peter 3:8**, and **I John 3:14-16**).
- This becomes an increasingly difficult subject to teach on wickedness increases (**II Timothy 3:13**) and natural affection is harder to find (**II Timothy 3:1-5**).

Ephesians 3:16 –

- “He would grant you” is a statement indicating what is about to be said is not up to man, but God (**Proverbs 19:21**, **Lamentations 3:37**, **Acts 5:33-39**, and **James 4:13-16**).
- God supplying according to riches in His glory (**Philippians 4:19** and **Colossians 1:27**).
- Strength here was going to be given by HIS SPIRIT (**Colossians 1:8-11**).
 - This was a direct operation of the Holy Spirit (cf. **I Corinthians 12:3-11**). However, it was a imperfect way to help the saints (**I Corinthians 12:27-13:13**).
 - Remember, the Holy Spirit was given to every Christian in the first century through the laying on of Apostle’s hands (**Acts 8:12-24** and **Acts 19:1-7**).
 - God’s strengthening them, in times past, was not “through the word”; but a direct action (**Isaiah 41:10**).
 - Now, we have all we need through the revealed word (**John 6:63**, **II Timothy 3:16-17**, and **II Peter 1:3-4**).
- In the “inner man” (**Romans 7:22** and **II Corinthians 4:16**).

Ephesians 3:17 –

- Through verse 19, we are going to focus on how we can understand the love of Christ as the main point through various principles.
- The indwelling of Christ (**John 14:20**, **John 14:23**, **John 17:20-23**, **II Corinthians 6:14-18**, **Galatians 2:20**, and **Colossians 1:27**).
- Through faith in the same sense of the power of baptism (**Colossians 2:12-13**).
- Rooted and grounded (**Proverbs 12:3**, **Colossians 1:23**, and **Colossians 2:7**; cf. **Matthew 13:5-6**) in love (**II Corinthians 5:14-15** and **Galatians 5:6**).
- Remember, we have this language in relationship to The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (**Romans 8:9** and **I John 4:15-16**).

Ephesians 3:18 –

- There are some things of God we cannot comprehend (**Psalms 92:5**, **Isaiah 40:28**, **Isaiah 55:7-9**, and **Romans 11:33-36**).
- However, there are things we can know and understand (**John 8:32**, **II Corinthians 8:9**, **II Peter 1:3-4**, **II Peter 1:12**, **I John 2:21**, and **I John 5:20**).
- Think of the term “breadth”. What comes to mind for me is how wide the scope of salvation is (**John 1:29**, **Colossians 1:5-6**, **Titus 2:11**, and **I John 2:1-2**).

- Think of the word “length”. What comes to mind for me is the word “eternity” (**John 6:66-68, Romans 5:21, Romans 6:23, Titus 3:6-7, I Peter 5:10, and Jude 1:21**).
- Think of the word “depth”. Consider the contrast to Christ (**Revelation 2:24**).
- The “height” brings Heaven to mind (**Ephesians 4:7-8**).
- Thus, the point is, we can understand the fullness of the love of Christ that passes common knowledge (see next verse).

Ephesians 3:19 –

- This verse starts by saying we can know the love of Christ (**Ephesians 5:1-2, Ephesians 5:25, I John 3:1, and I John 4:7-16**).
- The Lord does not contradict Himself by saying “passeth knowledge”. We’re left to conclude that it is worldly knowledge that cannot grasp this (**I Corinthians 2:14**).
- Being filled with the fullness of God is about Jesus (**Colossians 2:6-10**) the church (**Ephesians 1:22-23**).

Ephesians 3:20 –

- God is able to do far more than we can think (**Genesis 18:1-14, Jeremiah 32:17, Jeremiah 32:27, Matthew 19:23-26, Luke 1:30-37, and Revelation 1:8**).
- The power that worked in them (**Ephesians 1:13 and Ephesians 1:19**; cf. **Acts 19:1-7**).
- Consider, during the age of miracles, these statements were very literal (**Matthew 21:18-22, Mark 16:15-20, Acts 9:36-43, and Acts 12:1-18**).

Ephesians 3:21 –

- To God be the glory (**Psalms 19:1, Psalms 57:5, Jeremiah 13:16, Romans 16:27, I Corinthians 10:31, and Jude 1:25**).
- Our task is to glorify Him (**Matthew 5:14-16, John 15:8, II Corinthians 9:12-13, I Peter 2:12, and I Peter 4:11**).