

## Wednesday Evening Bible Study

February 28, 2024

Series - The Life and Writings of the Apostle Paul

*The Prison Epistles*

*The Letter to the Ephesians*

*Ephesians – Chapter Three*

Memory Verse - Ephesians 3:19

*And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

### Introduction

This chapter continues the discussion regarding the inclusion of the Gentiles in the household of God and concludes with Paul mentioning again his prayer for the Ephesians that they would not only know about God, but that they also would know God more intimately.

#### I Paul Reveals His Mystery (vs. 1 - 12)

*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (Romans 11:25)*

The mystery referred to here is explained in verse 6 and involves the inclusion of the Gentiles in the plan and promises of God. The word mystery is used 5 times in Ephesians and 5 times in Colossians, roughly half of the times it is used in the entire Bible. Most times the word mystery is used to refer to the gospel.

In 1 Corinthians 15:51 the word “mystery” is used to refer to the rapture:

*"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)*

In Ephesians 5:32, the word “mystery” refers to the Bride of Christ:

*"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Ephesians 5:31-32)*

#### II Paul Reflects Upon His Ministry (vs. 7 – 8; 13 - 21)

**A His Ministry Included Preaching (vs. 7 – 8)**

- 1 Preaching Should Be Powerful (v. 7)
- 2 Preaching Should Be Pointed (2 Timothy 4:1 – 4)

*"This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;"*  
(Titus 1:13)

- 3 Preaching Should Be Productive (vs. 9 – 12)

**B His Ministry Inspired Problems (v. 13)**

- 1 In Perils (2 Corinthians 11:23 – 33)
- 2 Now in Prison (3:1; 6:20)

**C His Ministry Involved Prayer (vs. 14 – 21; see 1:15 - 23)**

This is the second time that Paul mentions in this letter that he has prayed that God would give the Ephesians understanding so that they could deepen their relationship with God.

*"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;"*  
(Philippians 3:7-10)