

Ephesians

Lesson #11, Chapter 3:1-7

Remember that you have access to God through Jesus Christ. Come into His presence now in prayer and ask Him to help you as you study.

1. Paul transitions from Chapter 2 into Chapter 3 with the phrase, *For this reason*. What reasons has he already given as he begins Chapter 3?
2. At this point in his life Paul had already been a prisoner of Rome for about 4 years. You may enjoy reading Acts 21:27-28:16 which recounts Paul's remarkable story. List 5 highlights of the action from your reading.
3. Though a prisoner of Rome, Paul calls himself a prisoner of _____. He is even a prisoner with a purpose. What is it (verse 1)? See also Acts 28:20, 27-28; 2 Cor. 4:8-15; 2 Tim. 2:10 which explain his purpose.
4. *Purpose* (to have aim, resolve, intention, function) glorifies the most menial and difficult tasks. Paul knew his purpose and he was able to endure trials with joy. What about you? Do you know what your purpose in life is? Look up the following verses to see *some* of what God's purpose is for you: Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 5:1-5; Col. 3:17; 1 Thess. 4:7; 1 Tim. 4:7; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Pet. 2:21; 3:8-9. Record your findings.
5. How does *living with a purpose* change your comings and goings of day to day life?

6. Paul leaves the thought which he began in verse 1 and embarks upon a parenthetical discussion about the Gentiles. In verse 2 Paul begins to explain his ministry to the Gentiles. How does he view his ministry according to verse 2? See also 1 Cor. 9:17 and Col. 1:25.

7. Define *stewardship* (NIV *administration*; KJV *dispensation* [Strong's #3622]).

8. Paul doesn't immediately tell us what the stewardship is that he has received from God, instead he tells us how he learned about his stewardship. See verse 3 and Gal. 1:11-12, 16.

9. What observations can you make about *revelation* that Paul explains here in verses 3-5?

10. Write out a short definition of *revelation* based upon what you have learned from Gal. 1:11-12 and Eph. 3:3-5.

11. Paul says that he gained insight into a mystery contained in the Bible which is the stewardship that has been entrusted to him. What is the mystery that has now been revealed of which Paul is steward? See verse 6.

12. That is one mystery, but there are other mysteries in the Bible. For an interesting rabbit trail, look up the following verses and record what you learn. See Matt. 13:10-11; Rom. 11:25-26; 16:25-27; 1 Cor. 2:6-10; 4:1; 15:51-52; Eph. 3:8-10; 5:28-32; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Rev. 10:6-7.

13. The idea that the Good News would be for all men, not just the Jews is a truth contained in the Old Testament (Is. 49:6; 56:6-7), so what is so earth shaking about what Paul says in verse 6? See also Gal. 3:26-29 and Eph. 2:13-22.

14. What observations can you make about Paul as a *minister* according to verse 7?

15. Verse 7 says that Paul was made a *minister* (NIV *servant*). The word Paul uses is the Greek word *diakonos* [Strong's #1249] from which we derive our word deacon. It literally means to run errands and conveys the idea of being an attendant or servant for others. How was Paul *made* a minister according to verse 7?

16. God may not have called you to a teaching ministry like Paul's, but He has given you at least one spiritual gift to serve in the body of Christ. What do you learn about your gift(s) from the following verses? See Rom. 11:29; 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-7; Eph. 4:7, 11-13; 1 Pet. 4:10-11.

17. You may feel that you don't have any ability to serve in the body of Christ, but the Scriptures tell us something different. What accompanies the gift (verse 7)? See also 2 Cor. 3:5-6 and 2 Pet. 1:3-4.

18. Again, we gain that same sense of purpose with which we began this lesson. Paul knows that he was called for a purpose. You have been called for a purpose also. What have you learned about your purpose from this lesson?