

Ephesians

Lesson #12, Chapter 3:8-13

With a prayerful heart read through Chapter 3 before beginning this lesson.

1. How does Paul identify himself in verse 8?
2. Why does he consider himself this way? See 1 Cor. 15:9 and 1 Tim. 1:12-15.
3. The world and many even within the Church would say that Paul has low self-esteem and needs to be built up. What do you learn about the proper way to view yourself from the following Scriptures? See Prov. 30:2-4; Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 6:3; Phil. 2:3-4; 1 Pet. 5:5-6.
4. Read the following verses to determine what steps you can make to change or guard your thinking, so you see yourself properly, in a way that honors God. See Prov. 25:27; 26:12; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 2:1-9; Phil. 2:5-7; 1 Tim. 6:17.
5. What was the purpose of the grace that was given to Paul (verse 8)?
6. What kind of response does this gift elicit in Paul (verse 8)?

7. What about you? When was the last time you were bowled over by the graciousness of God toward you? Think about God's favor to you and how He has extended privilege and mercy to you. Are you moved to awe and gratitude for what He has done? If not, it may be that you think you deserve the good things He grants you. If you believe that is your attitude, review the verses above and with a repentant heart, ask God to lower your view of yourself and heighten your view of Him.

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. ~A. W. Tozer¹

8. Paul delights that he has the privilege of preaching about Christ to the Gentiles. How are Christ's *riches* described (verse 8)? Also look up Rom. 11:33 where Paul uses the same word for "riches."

- a. What does is meant by the phrase, "the unfathomable riches of Christ [ESV, NKJV, NIV *the unsearchable riches of Christ*]?"

9. Verse 9 reveals the second part of Paul's preaching ministry. What is it?

10. Define *administration* (ESV *plan*; NKJV *fellowship* [Strong's #3622]).

11. What is the *mystery* that Paul is referring to? See verse 6.

¹Tozer, A. W. *The Knowledge of the Holy*. New York: Harper Collins, 1961. 1.

12. What observations can you make about the mystery in verse 9?

13. What attribute of God does Paul mention in verse 9? Why does he include that attribute here in his discussion about the mystery? Why does he want us to know that about God at this particular time?

14. What will happen when the mystery is brought to light? See verse 10. How is that truth made known? To whom is it made known?

15. Who are the *rulers* and *authorities* mentioned, and what do you learn about them? See verse 10 and 1:21; 6:12; Rom. 8:38; Col. 1:16; 1 Pet. 3:22.

16. Can you think of a reason why God would want to reveal His wisdom to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places?

17. What is the eternal purpose which God carried out in Christ Jesus? See verses 8-10?

18. What does that phrase *eternal purpose* (verse 11) convey about God?

19. Define *access* (NIV *approach* [Strong's #4318]).
- a. How is access to the Father made possible according to verse 12? In what manner can we come before God (verse 12)? Also see Heb. 4:14-16; 10:19-22.

20. Are you taking advantage of your *privilege of access* to God? Think about your prayer life. How often do you come to Him throughout the day? What is your manner and attitude in coming before Him?

It is the believer's privilege to have access at all times to his heavenly Father. Whatever our desires, our difficulties, our wants, we are at liberty to spread all before him. It matters not how much we may have sinned, we may ask and expect pardon. It signifies nothing how poor we are, we may plead his promise that he will provide all things needful. We have permission to approach his throne at all times—in midnight's darkest hour, or in noontide's most burning heat. Exercise thy right, O believer, and live up to thy privilege. Thou art free to all that is treasured up in Christ—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. It matters not what thy need is, for there is fulness of supply in Christ, and it is there for thee. O what a "freedom" is thine! Freedom from condemnation, freedom to the promises, freedom to the throne of grace, and at last freedom to enter heaven!²

21. Paul wraps up what he has been saying in verses 2-12 and returns to the thought with which he began this chapter. What request does he make of the Ephesian church in verse 13? Why?

22. How is Paul's request in verse 13 tied to what he has been writing them in verses 2-12?

²Spurgeon, C. H. (1995). *Morning and Evening: Daily readings* (September 19 AM). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

23. Paul never seemed to lose sight of the eternal, even when going through difficulty. What was Paul's secret? Look at what we have already studied in this book for clues. How can you apply those same things to your life, so that you too can maintain an eternal perspective while living here on earth?