

Ephesians – Identity
Part 6 – Servants
09/03/2023

“I’ve fought the good fight. I’ve finished the race. I’ve kept the faith.”

- I believe we serve our way into significance.

Eph. 3:1-13 (ESV) For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

- First he gives us assurances.
- Then he says here’s the actions.
- He tells us who we are in Christ
- Then he tells us what to do
- Learn to resist the temptation to base your assurance on your actions

1st) Paul is a **PRISONER** of Jesus.

Eph. 3:1 (ESV) For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—

- Your assignment is what guides your life.

1 Peter 4:10-11 (ESV) As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

- As you align your heart with His, He will guide you and reveal His specific assignment for your life.
- God's assignment for your life is not about achieving worldly success or recognition, but about living in obedience to Him and making a difference in the lives of others.

Philippians 1:12-14 (NIV) Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

Paul's assignment helped him to understand his **CIRCUMSTANCES** in light of his calling.

Paul's assignment helped him to see God's **SOVEREIGN** control where he had no control.

Psalms 37:23 (NLT) The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

Paul is a Prisoner for the **GENTILES**

Question: What is guiding in your life?

Acts 17:26 (ESV) but I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

2nd) Paul is a **MINISTER** of the mystery.

Eph. 3:4-5 (ESV) When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

Eph. 3:7 (ESV) Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

- Minister - attend to the needs of (someone).

He was appointed a minister **OF** God's grace and then became a minister **BY** God's grace

- We're all managers of this mystery.

2 Cor. 3:5-6 (ESV) Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

- A mystery - something formerly unknown that has been made known by God. A secret revealed. A package unwrapped.

Paul did not discover this mystery; it was **REVEALED** to him.

Gal. 1:17 (TPT) And I had no desire to run to Jerusalem and try to impress those who had become apostles before me. Instead, I withdrew into the Arabian Desert.

- The job description of a minister is to reveal a mystery.

Eph. 3:6 (ESV) This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Eph. 3:8-9 (ESV) To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God,

- This mystery all revolves around God's grace.
- It's a mystery when they hear this thing of grace.

3rd) Paul is a **SERVANT** of the Gospel.

Eph. 3:7 (ESV) Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

- Minister - servant

3 Tools of the Believer:

A) God's **GRACE**

Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace,

- Servanthood grows out of an understanding of grace.

B) God's **POWER**

"According to the working of God's power."

C) Our **RESPONSE**

- Humility

Eph. 3:8 (ESV) To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

- True humility is the ability to recognize our need for God at every point of our lives.
- Paul's revelation didn't give him a big head, it gave him a humble heart.