

VBF Women's Study
Lesson 21 EPHESIANS 3:1-13

As you read through and study this letter, humble yourself before God, asking Him to open your heart and help you understand His Word. As the Psalmist prayed: "Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law" (Psalm 119:18).

Assignment: Read through Ephesians chapter 3 several times. Attempt to answer the following discussion questions. Enjoy your study!

Questions:

Interpretive Note: It is important to see that verses 3:2-12 are a parenthetical statement. Paul says in verse 1 "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles...13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory."

1. Make observations from the following concerning Paul's attitude concerning his imprisonment:
 - a. 2Tim. 1:8-9
 - b. 2Tim. 2:8-10
 - c. Eph. 3:1, 4:1, Philemon 1:1
 - d. Eph. 3:13
 - e. Eph. 6:18-20
 - f. Col. 4:2-4

2. In light of what you observed in question 1, what is your attitude toward suffering for Christ? Is it like Paul's? Why, why not?

3. Understanding question 1, and the above note, for what "reason" does Paul not want the Ephesians to "loose heart" at his sufferings? (See 3:1 & 13) When you suffered for Christ and if you related your suffering to others, did people loose heart or were they encouraged?

4. In Eph 3:2 Paul says he was made a steward of God's grace, which was given to him. List the number of times in this passage (3:1-13) where Paul states this "grace was given."

5. How does what Paul says in verse 2 relate to what he says in verse 3? What is he talking about in verse 3? (See Gal 1:11-2:2 also)

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6. Make observations concerning Paul's and our stewardship from the following. Are you a good steward?
 - a. 1 Cor. 4:1-2
 - b. 1Peter 4:10-11

Theological Note: It is important to see that the distinction between Jews and Gentiles (3:6-8) still remains (i.e. Gentiles do not become Jews), yet now Gentiles become "fellow (i.e. along with believing Jews) heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

7. In verses 3-6 Paul speaks specifically about "the mystery." From these verses list 6 observations about "the mystery." What is the mystery?
8. Look at Eph 3:6 and Galatians 3, (and time permitting, using a concordance to look at other passages where the term "the promise" (vs 6) is used). From your research what do you think "the promise" is?
9. In the second time that Paul states grace was given to him (verse(s)_____), explain specifically what this grace given **was "according to"**. (See 3:20 also)
10. In the third time that Paul states grace was given to him (verse(s)_____), list the two **purposes** (8-9) and **the reason** (10-12) this grace was given.
11. From 3:13 make 2 observations about Paul's tribulations.
12. Do you see the suffering that arises from the use of the gifting that God has graced you with as His tool to benefit other believers and to bring glory to Himself in the heavenly places? Why or why not?