



## The Revelation of God's Grace

Last week we saw how the Apostle Paul understood his position and place on this earth as a prisoner and slave of Christ. Once an arrogant Pharisee and religious dogmatist, Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus ([Acts 9](#)) was a 180-degree turn, and he obeyed dutifully and vigorously.

Today let's look a little deeper at Paul's comment in [Ephesians 3:2-3](#) where he further defends the call to preach the gospel to the Gentiles:

***For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. [Eph 3:1-3](#)***

Here we see Paul referencing his comment back in [Ephesians 1:9-11](#) where he said, ***"He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth."*** The word *administration* here is the same Greek word translated *stewardship* in [3:2](#) (*oikonomia*), and in fact Paul spends most of chapter 3 reiterating the theme of this stewardship he was called to.

Viewing chapter 3 as a whole, Paul was really driving this point home: God called him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and this gospel was a mystery never before revealed to mankind. This is the stewardship he was entrusted with in ministry and he's very detailed about this as he continues his letter:

***By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. [Eph 3:4-7](#)***

Interestingly, in verses 3 and 5, Paul uses the words *revelation* and its partner adjective *revealed* (Greek: [apokalupsis](#) and [apokalupto](#)), which is also the title of the final book of the Bible (Revelation) and is commonly used in the NT in reference to the gospel. These words mean to *unveil, make known, and manifest something that was previously hidden*. As we know from the Book of Revelation, Christ is finally *revealed* in full, evil is defeated, and His kingdom is manifested in a glorious, physical manner as He returns to Earth.



As we've studied Ephesians together, we've seen Paul reiterate the Gentile's inclusion in God's promise made to Abraham through the gospel of Christ. And previously in chapter 1, and here again in chapter 3, Paul tells us this fact was a mystery hidden in God; the gospel was revealed (apokalupto) to the apostles and prophets at the proper time.

Christians should long for the final *revelation* of Christ at the end of this age. For the believer, the great apokalupsis brings hope, peace, restoration, and rest. But until that awesome day of the Lord comes, we have work to do – which is to carry on the task of sharing the gospel of grace and the revealed mysteries of Christ found in Scripture.

Just as Paul regarded himself as a [prisoner](#) and [slave](#) of Christ, so should we likewise deem our own lives on earth – we're here to serve God in whatever capacity He has ordained for us. While the era of apostles and prophets has ceased, as the Lord completed His revelation of hidden mysteries to mankind through the closing of the canon of Scripture ([Rev 22:19](#)), our shared stewardship of Christ's gospel goes forward, and if sown in love will continue to bear fruit for the Kingdom as we diligently submit and serve our wonderful, loving Master and King, Who will soon be fully apokalupto in all His might, glory, and majesty.

~Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece