

February 10/11, 2001

The Truth About Our Life in Christ

A Study in the Book of Ephesians

One for the Angels

Ephesians 3:1-13

Study Questions

Opening Discussion

1. Have you ever had information that was so exciting you couldn't help but share it with anyone who would listen? Share one of those experiences. What made that information so meaningful to you?
2. Suppose your neighbor learned that the water in your neighborhood was toxic and potentially fatal, but opted to quietly move away rather than warn anyone else in the neighborhood. Your child dies from the water. Later you learn your neighbor knew the truth but let your child die because he didn't want to bother you with a warning. How would you feel about that neighbor? What if you were the neighbor who knew the truth and remained silent and a child died. How would you feel?

Bible Study

1. Reread Ephesians 2 to pick up the flow of thought for chapter 3.
2. Read Acts 21:27-36 (and following verses if you have time) to get some background on what led to Paul's arrest and eventual imprisonment in Rome. How does the Acts account line up with Paul's words in 3:1?
3. Paul claims to be a "steward" of the message of the mystery that was given to him by God's grace. What does it mean to be a steward? What does it mean to be a "steward of the mystery"?
4. How does Paul define the "mystery" in 3:6? What is the mystery?

Read also Galatians 3:23-29. How do these words in Galatians compare with Paul's words to the Ephesians?

5. Paul said not only was he a steward of the message, but also called as a "minister" to deliver this message. The word translated "minister" is our word for deacon, which means a servant or table waiter. In what way did Paul serve the Ephesians as he stewarded the message of the mystery?

In what ways are we to serve others by fulfilling our calling to steward the message?
Do you typically think of sharing Christ with others as a way to "serve" them?
How does this affect your thoughts about witnessing to others?

6. When Ephesians 3:10 tells us this wonderful mystery, that the church is ONE in Christ, it reveals the “multi-colored” wisdom of God to the angels in the heavenlies (both good and evil).

What do these other passages tell us about the angels’ awareness of what goes on in the church?

I Peter 1:10-12

Luke 15:10

I Cor. 4:9

I Cor. 11:10

Were you aware that God is displaying His wisdom to the angels in the heavenlies through what He is doing in His Church—specifically, through this mystery that has been revealed that we are all “one body” in Christ?

7. Paul states that God has been working out history to this end (1:10, 3:11) in Christ. He states that this message is so glorious that it is worth whatever it costs him to proclaim it (3:13).

How important is it that we both live in light of this truth and serve others by stewarding this message to all who will listen? How does this passage motivate you to proclaim this truth at all costs as Paul did?

Application

1. When was the last time you shared the truth of the Gospel with someone else? What should motivate us is not guilt, but excitement to be given the grace to serve others by unveiling this mystery of what Christ has done for them.

List 3 people you would like to share this glorious message with in the next several weeks. Pray for these people daily that God would give you an open door to share His truth.

2. In light of this passage, what should we be doing to “make known” God’s wisdom through the church to the angels?
3. Spend some time thanking God that He has revealed this “mystery” to us and pray that we would be faithful “stewards” of this mystery to others.