

Stewards of Grace *(Ephesians 3:1-13)*

Paul's Ministry (v. 1-2)

- Paul asserts that we are "being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (2:22)
 - That is, Jews & Gentiles are being made into something new, a united people in whom God's Spirit dwells
- Paul's calling was to be a steward of God's grace
 - Steward: one responsible for the oversight and management of someone else's belongings
 - Grace: a free, unmerited gift
 - That which saves us (3:5a, 8a)
 - The on-going gift of God at work in us
 - It connects us to God and one another
 - It enlists us into His service
 - It empowers us to do what He calls us to

Mystery & Revelation (v. 3-7)

- Paul's ministry is marked by God's revelation of a mystery
 - Mystery: That which was formerly unknown that has now been made know
- That mystery is the Gospel itself
 - That God would reconcile people to Himself through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus
- Part of this mystery is the Gentiles are now co-heirs with the Jews of God's promises through Christ (v. 6)
 - We are co-heirs because Jesus gives us freely what He has deserved as the obedient Son (2 Cor 1:20)
- And this mystery is now revealed to the world through the preaching of the Gospel

Stewards of Grace (v. 8-12)

- Paul reflects briefly on his inadequacies to be chosen for this mission (v. 8)
- But then shifts his focus to the mission itself: Displaying God's wisdom in the redemptive work of Jesus
 - Through whom we can approach the very presence of God with confidence (v. 12; Heb 4:16)
- This job belongs to the Church as a whole
 - Like Paul, we are called to administer God's grace to others
 - All who receive grace are called to give grace (see 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10)
- This serves as an object lesson for spiritual beings (v. 10c; 1 Pet 1:12)

Suffering for Love (v. 13)

- Paul was willing to be imprisoned, beaten, stoned, starved, shipwrecked, ridiculed and even killed so that the Gentiles could know the Good News about Jesus
 - And he says that they are all worth it
 - He wants this to be a point of encouragement, not dismay
- We often avoid hardship
 - But sometimes the Gospel requires us to undergo it for the sake of others

So What?

- Are we revealing Christ to the world?
- Are we being good stewards of the grace of God to others?
- Are we willing to suffer hardship to do it?

Meditation Verse: Ephesians 3:7