

Bible Study Packet Week 5



**Pastor Marlon McDuffie
Lead Pastor**

Ephesians 3:1-13

Paul's Mission

Read 3:1-13 a couple of times.

Paul began this section with "When I think of all this" in verse 1 but inserted a long parenthesis in verses 2 through 13. Thus, the "When I think of all this" in verse 14 picks up again where Paul broke off in verse 1.

Mystery (verse 3) A secret. Unlike the guarded rites of the mystery cults and the close-kept knowledge of the Gnostics, there was nothing "mysterious" or incomprehensible about God's secret. It was simply kept until God chose to reveal it, and now it is absolutely not to be kept private.

1.a. Read verses 1-2 and 7-8. What was Paul's attitude toward his ministry?

b. What does his attitude teach about service to God?

2. a. In verse 3, Paul speaks of the "mysterious plan" that God made known to him. What is this mysterious plan? (see verses 3-6)

b. Why do you think Paul describes it the way he does in verse 8?

3.a. What was God's timetable for revealing this mystery? (see verses 5,9 -10)

b. What was God's purpose in this plan? (see verses 10-11)

4. Define what you think Paul meant by "grace" in verse 2 and verses 7-8. Compare your answers to our definition.

verse 2

verses 7-8

Freedom (verse 12) A legal right: freedom to speak frankly or to stand without fear, especially before a ruler. "Boldness" in most other versions.

5.a. What does verse 12 teach about conditions and attitudes in seeking God?

b. What are some practical implications of this verse?

Lose heart (verse 13) "To become tired, lazy, despondent, and desperate," or to lose strength.

6. Explain in your own words what our "boldness and confidence" in approaching God (see verse 12) is founded on.

7.a. Read 1 Corinthians 4:9-13 and 2 Corinthians 11:24-29, then summarize the suffering to which Paul referred in Ephesians 3:13.

b. To earn this suffering, all Paul had done was to preach the gospel (see Ephesians 3:8). What kinds of suffering are not glorious? (see 1 Peter 2:19-23; 4:15-16)

c. Describe Paul's attitude about his suffering (see verse 13)

8. What do you think is the main message of 3:1-13?

9. Why do you think Paul justified and explained his mission? (see verses 2-13) Think about the purpose of this letter and the opinion his readers might have had of him.

10. Has there been a particular insight from this lesson that you would like to focus on in the next week? You might want to write it down here so that it doesn't slip your thoughts when you go to the next section. Pray for God's leading in ways to make this truth or principle really take hold in your life.

11. List any questions you have about this passage.