Summary of Chapter 2

- On the cross Jesus responded to Man’s greatest inherited issues: **sins & transgressions**.
- God broke down the barrier between two groups: Jews & Gentiles… we are now one in Christ!
- **The unity of the Church** is metaphorically compared to 5 things: (1) fellow citizens; (2) God’s household; (3) whole building; (4) holy temple; (5) God’s dwelling place.

**SUMMARY**: You were not saved only to escape hell; you were saved for a greater purpose… to bring Him glory!
OUTLINE of Chapter 3

• In Chapter 1 - What is our possession in Christ?
• In Chapter 2 - What is our position in Christ?
• In Chapter 3 - What is our purpose in Christ?

I. GOD’S MARVELOUS PLAN FOR THE WORLD (V.1-13).

II. A SPECIAL APOSTOLIC PRAYER FOR THE EPHESIAN CHURCH (V. 14-22).

Ephesians 3

1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—
2 Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets.
6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

• Notice Paul’s introduction to this next section: He calls himself “a prisoner of Christ Jesus” (v. 1).
• Why “of Christ”??
• “the mystery” (v. 3-4) = NOT the same as a secret; always there but hidden/veiled UNTIL the “veil is removed”.
EPHESIANS 3

4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.

- Paul explains the reason he is writing all that he is writing about: That they might be “able to understand his [my] insight into the mystery of Christ”.
- “people in other generations” (v. 5) - refers to ancient Israel; the prophets of the Old Testament.
- COMPARE: Hebrews 1:1-2; 1 Peter 1:10-12*
- The New Testament APOSTLES are equal to the Old Testament PROPHETS!

The great MYSTERY??

1 The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. 2 “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

COMPARE: JOHN 1:9-14
WHO is the MYSTERY??

8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

9 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

 Ephesians 3

6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

- THE MYSTERY IS:
  - THE CHOSEN PEOPLE = JEWS + GENTILES

  “THE CHURCH”

- We take this for granted today in the 21st Century Church because there are even more Gentiles than Jews... but this wasn’t the case back then!
- WHY was this so important to clarify in the Gospels?
- “Judaizers” were the biggest threat to the Early Church.
7 I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power. 8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, 9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

- FIRST Paul calls himself: “Prisoner of Christ”…
- NOW he calls himself… “Servant of the Gospel”
- NOTE: “True Freedom in Service”

- Paul clearly states his purpose and ministry mission statement:

  Preach to Gentiles & Teach (make plain) the Jews.

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This is Paul’s Grand Summary of “The Mystery of Christ”.

10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. 13 I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.
An Apostolic Prayer

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

- Count your blessings!
- NOTE: The depth and the weight of Paul’s intercession!

Homework

- READ: EPHESIANS 4

- Answer these questions:

1. What are the “five-fold ministries” that God gave to govern the church?

2. How does the apostle Paul describe the “futile thinking” of the Gentiles?