



Lesson 6: The Mystery of the Ages

Ephesians 3:1-13

Why am I here? Many unbelievers find themselves asking this question void of purpose and seeking to find a reason for their existence. Many believers, sadly, have an answer to this question, but only a very shallow one. "I'm here to glorify God" is a good response, but the follow up question then becomes, "And how do you do that?" Many would say that God is glorified as we live holy lives, and they are not wrong. But in the passage we are studying today, Paul goes deeper. He shows how God's plan for this age is more than just not sinning; God has much bigger plans. God is seeking to display his character to all humanity, and even to angels and demons through what he is doing *in the church*.

GOD'S PLAN FOR THE AGES

- **God desires to _____ his _____ to all.**
The peak of this passage is verse 10, where we find that through the church the "multifaceted" wisdom of God might be seen.
 - **God wants _____ to know his greatness**
Paul states that it is his job to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that he is supposed to bring to light for *everyone* the plan of the mystery. Paul uses the wordy mystery to describe something which had previously been hidden by God, but now was revealed. Rather than a small, select group having access to this knowledge, God had made it clear to all.



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- **God wants _____ to know his greatness**
God is seeking to bring himself glory, not just from humanity, but from all sentient, created creatures.

- **God desire to bring everything under _____**
In 1:9-10 God describes his ultimate plan as “uniting all things in Christ,” or, as he describes it later in that chapter “put[ting] all things under his feet.” God’s desire is that Christ rule and reign over all.

- **God desires to unite _____ and _____**
The mystery that God had shown to all to demonstrate his character is that Jews and Gentiles were on equal footing. While in the Old Testament God promised to one day bless Gentiles, that he would bless them so much as to put them on equal footing with Jews was jaw-dropping to first century believers.

OUR PLACE IN GOD’S PLAN

- **Paul viewed himself as a _____ of God’s grace.**
Paul had received God’s grace personally, and that motivated him to then share that grace with others. Grace obligated Paul’s service to God. While grace is a gift that could never be earned, it is nevertheless a gift that obliges us to live a certain way, and to share with others the good news that we ourselves have received.
- **Paul desired his followers to remain confident.**
Paul was sitting in a jail cell because he had sought to bring Jews and Gentiles together (check Acts 21-28). While that seemed discouraging, Paul had not quit on his mission and viewed his sufferings as part of the price to pay for the privilege of his message, a price he was more than willing to pay.

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