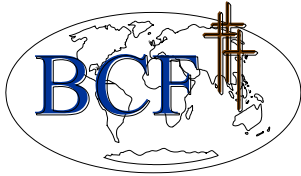


BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE FELLOWSHIP

EPHESIANS Lesson One



CHAPTER THREE

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery . . .” [Eph. 3:9 (KJV)].

This chapter has some very important statements concerning the mystery (truths about the Body of Christ) that God revealed through the apostle Paul. Paul is the only one whom the Scriptures tell us received this information directly from Christ Jesus. Our Lord revealed these truths to him over a period of time (Acts 26:16), as His plan for the Church of this dispensation began to unfold.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of the Dallas Theological Seminary, a great scholar and teacher of the Bible, wrote concerning the ministry given to the apostle Paul, as follows:

“To the Apostle (Paul) were given two distinct revelations: (1) that of the way of salvation and life under grace (Galatians 1:11-12), and (2) that of the doctrine of the Church which is Christ’s body (Ephesians 3:1-6). These two bodies of truth include the great New Testament message which is Christianity, something Paul termed ‘my gospel’ (Rom. 2:16). For a time he stood alone in the defense of the new system of Christianity (Gal. 2:11-14).”

As God chose Moses to be the master-builder of the tabernacle in the wilderness (for Israel), so He chose Paul to be the master-builder of the church in this dispensation of grace. In Paul’s epistles alone do we find truths specifically concerning the Body of Christ. In his writings only do we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church of today.

1. (v. 1) Whose prisoner did Paul say he was? _____ For whose benefit was he a prisoner? _____
2. (v. 2) What is our present dispensation called? _____

Remember: The word “dispensation” comes from the Greek word *oikonomia* (economy) which means house law. It is sometimes translated as administration or stewardship. It refers to the set of rules by which God governs His household during a given period in history. These rules have changed from time to time, but God has always announced these changes through a key figure, in this case, the apostle Paul.

3. (v. 3) How was the mystery of the body of Christ made known to Paul? _____

NOTE: The word “revelation” is defined as God’s disclosure of Himself and of His will to His creatures.

4. (v. 4) In whose writings will you gain information about the “mystery”? _____

5. (v. 5) Concerning the mystery, what does Paul say about prior ages and generations? _____

6. (v. 6) What was the message of this mystery? _____

7. In another letter Paul mentions the subject of the mystery. Read Colossians 1:19-29. _____ (check)
8. (v. 7) How did Paul become a minister of the “mystery message”? _____

9. (v. 8) What did Paul preach among the Gentiles? _____

NOTE: The word “unreachable” means not traceable. The mystery concerning Jews and Gentiles being joined together in one body is not part of Old Testament prophecy. It is not even the message which Peter and the disciples preached on the day of Pentecost, for they offered the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6; 3:19-21) in accordance with prophecy (Acts 2:16). Paul’s message was entirely new.

10. (v. 9) How long had the mystery been kept secret? _____
11. (v. 10) How is the “manifold wisdom of God” to be made known? _____
12. If this was a commission or a ministry given of God to the apostle Paul, are we to accept it as also given to us? (Read 1 Cor. 11:1; then Phil. 3:17, 4:9; and 2 Tim. 2:2.) Yes _____ No _____
13. (v. 11) With what does this secret plan agree? _____
14. (vv. 11-12) In whom do we have boldness and access to God? _____
15. We know from the Book of Acts that Paul suffered greatly in taking this message to the Gentiles. When he wrote Ephesians he was in a Roman prison. What was he concerned about in verse 13?

16. Paul was more concerned about others than he was his own circumstances. The next few verses contain his prayer for believers:
- (v. 16) How is your inner man to be strengthened? _____
- (v. 17a) How is Christ to dwell in your heart? _____
- (v. 17b) How are you to be rooted and grounded? _____
17. (vv. 18-19) What goes well beyond mere knowledge? _____
 With what may you be filled? _____
18. (v. 20) What is God able to do for you? _____

- Where is God’s power at work? _____

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