

War of the Worlds

Studies in Ephesians

A Mission from God

Introduction to Ephesians 3:1-21

As Jake and Elwood Blues showed in "The Blues Brothers", when you're on a mission from God there is an unstoppable will to carry out that mission. The apostle Paul exemplified this in Ephesians 3 as he explained his specific "mission from God". However, Paul's life was only a picture of God's purpose for all believers—God has a mission or ministry for each of us to fulfill. As in Paul's case, God has an overall plan within which our mission fits. God doesn't merely give us a plan that affects our lives alone; we fit into His larger plan to redeem the world. As Paul explained, the details of this larger plan had been hidden prior to the coming of Christ, but it had finally been revealed through the apostles and prophets. The essence of this mystery was that Gentiles were heirs,

members and partakers of God's promises that had been earlier made to His people, the Jews. Paul's mission was to now take this message to Gentiles as well as Jews. He described this mission as a gift of grace that had been given to him, the very least of all saints. Similarly, each of us has an individual mission from God, a gift of grace to serve God in a particular way; but this mission is part of God's overall plan to save the world. Paul went on to explain the power for this mission, which was twofold. First, through the encouragement of other faithful believers, we are able to continue on. However, an even greater power fills us internally with the fullness of God when we come to understand all the



**The war is on...
are you ready?**

dimensions of Christ's love for us, a love which surpasses human knowledge. A final element in our mission from God is to believe in its purpose, which is to bring glory to God in the church and in Christ Jesus forever. God's mission is not really about us, although we are blessed by participating in it. His mission for us is really about Him—for His glory, and to be carried out through His church. Thus, we must all be on a mission from God.

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- **Worship**—You were planned for God's pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God's family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You were made for a mission

Study/Discussion Questions for Ephesians 3:1-21

(For answers to questions attend an ABF or go to [www.celebrationnet.com/resources/leader resources](http://www.celebrationnet.com/resources/leader_resources))

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| 1. Read 3:1-3. Who was the target for Paul's mission (v1), and how had that happened (v2-3)? Where had that gotten him (v1), and what can we learn from his example? | |
| 2. From 3:4-6 what "mystery of Christ" had God revealed to Paul (v6)? Why would this have been such a mystery to earlier Jews (v5), and such an unexpected truth to both Jews and Gentiles? | |
| 3. According to 3:7 what was Paul's ministry, and how did that occur (see also v2-3)? How should we follow this model for any ministry or service that we do for someone? | |

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Ephesians 3:1-21 Study Questions (cont)

4. In 3:8-9 what was the form and content of Paul's ministry to the Gentiles (v8, 9)? How did Paul view his part in this (v8)? How can we apply this?

5. Based on 3:10-11 what was to be the outcome of Paul's mission (v10), and what does this mean? What would insure the success of this mission (v11)?

6. From 3:12-13 what is our main source of encouragement as we carry out God's mission (v12)? What is a second important source of encouragement (v13)? What does this tell us?

7. Read 3:14-15. What was Paul's response to God's mission for him (v14)? What did he know about every family's relationship with God, and how did this encourage him to pray for Gentiles?

8. According to 3:16-17 what did Paul pray for the Ephesians (v16), and for what purpose (v17a)? What goal for the Christian life (and ministry) does this give us?

9. Looking at 3:17-19 what must God's people be "rooted and grounded" in (v17b, 19)? How do we come to "understand" this (v18), and what will be the twofold result (v19)?

10. From 3:20-21 what is the ultimate purpose of our mission (v21)? What must we remember about God, and praise Him for (v20)? How do these two truths go hand in hand?

11. List ways to stay focused on God's mission (v1-11), and to stay energized as we do it (v12-19)? Specifically, how do we bring glory to God in Christ and in the church each day (v20-21)?

Scripture to Remember

***"To Him be glory in the church
and in Christ Jesus to all genera-
tions forever and ever. Amen."
Ephesians 3:21***

Celebration Fellowship

*Reaching—
Restoring—Raising Up*

We're on the web

www.celebrationnet.com

Life Group Questions—How Encouragement Comes

(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship that enable us to grow in Christ.)

1. Ask group to share about a great encourager in their lives, and what made them such an encouragement to them.
2. Why are fatigue, failure, and frustration the sources of discouragement? Which one is your biggest nemesis?
3. Paul was encouraged by Priscilla and Aquilla because they shared a common faith, experience, and trade. How can we apply this to encouraging each other?
4. Discuss why fear and crisis feed discouragement. How can you feel God's presence, and hear His voice in times like this?
5. What are some greater purposes God has in store for you beyond your daily "job"? Talk about ways that you, as a group, can help each other remember this.
6. Discuss anything else that impressed you from the message today if you have time.