

EPHESIANS 3:7-8

LESSON 17

A Ministry Given to Paul

1. Ephesians 3:7 – Paul Made a Minister

- a. This is his special apostleship as the minister Rom 15:15-16 and the apostle Rom 11:13
- b. Charles Ryrie's challenge was a good one – was Paul *exclusively* revealed the mystery?
- c. Paul was not the only one to receive revelation of it – Eph 3:5... so, what?
- d. Exclusivity requires only he be the first, chief, or sole source of knowledge of it.
- e. Paul the first – who else taught it before him? There's no evidence, but 1 Cor 3:10, 9:17, 4:15-16, 12:28, 15:3, 1Ti 1:16 shows something coming first from Paul
- f. Paul the chief – He has highest authority concerning these things – Ro 11:13. 2Co 11:5, 11:28, 12:11, Gal 2:6, (authority to rebuke Peter in 2:11)
- g. Paul the sole source – where else in scripture is "body of Christ" "grace" "cross" "mystery" spoken about? All ~20x mystery used referring to the church is in his epistles.
- h. Paul, the minister of Christ to Gentiles – Romans 15:8-15-16, 1 Cor 9:16-17

2. Ephesians 3:8 – Effectual Power and Unsearchable Riches

- a. "*effectual working of his power*" – God's power with Paul, but when? Acts 15:12, 1 Thess 1:5, 2:13; Rom 15:19 – his power was needed for suffering – Ac 9:15, 2Co 12:9-11
- b. "*least of all saints*" – He is least because he persecuted the church - 1Cor 15:9-10, Gal 1:13, 1:23; Acts 26:9-11 – he is the least, but he is not behind any – 2 Cor 11:5, 12:11
 - i. Lack of humility is enabled by a bar set so low people think they can reach it.
- c. Kingdom riches were prophesied to Israel – Rom 9:5, Isa 61:6, 60:17+, Matt 5:3-11
- d. Unlike those, these riches are unsearchable – John 5:39 vs. Eph 3:8, 1:18, Phil 4:19
- e. Paul was sent to preach these riches of Christ to Gentiles – Eph 1:7,2:7, Col 1:27, 2:2-3

"Ultradispensationalists are fond of using this passage [Ephesians 3:1-12] to attempt to prove that to Paul exclusively was revealed the mystery of the church, the Body of Christ. If this is provable, then the mystery church, the body, could not have begun until Paul came on the scene." – **Ryrie, Charles. *Dispensationalism*. Moody, 2007. p236.**

<http://graceambassadors.com/mystery/a-response-to-ryries-challenge>

"That the Gentiles were to be saved was no mystery Romans 9:24-33; Romans 10:19-21. The mystery "hid in God" was the divine purpose to make of Jew and Gentile a wholly new thing--"the church, which is his Christ's body," formed by the baptism with the Holy Spirit 1Cor 12:12; 1Cor 12:13 and in which the earthly distinction of Jew and Gentile disappears ; Eph 2:14; Eph 2:15; Col 3:10; Col 3:11. The revelation of this mystery, which was foretold, but not explained by Christ Matthew 16:18 was committed to Paul. In his writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church. " – **Scofield, Cyrus I. *Scofield Reference Bible*. 1917. Ephesians 3:6**