

Get a Life!

Ephesians

Revealer of Secrets

Lesson Fourteen

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Ephesians

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Ephesians 4:1

Revealer of Secrets

Lesson Goal: To help students to understand Paul's role as missionary to the Gentiles.

Scripture: Ephesians 3:7-13;

The apostle Paul was well aware of what God was doing in his life. He had known from the day that the light shown down from Heaven, on the road to Damascus, that God had a personal task for him. He heard Jesus Himself say that when Saul got to Damascus he would "be told all that you have been assigned to do." (Acts 22:10) Now, writing to the Ephesians, Paul says that he had been given two very special opportunities. The first was to know the secret, he calls it a mystery, that had not been known until Jesus came to earth.

That mystery was, as we have been saying, the grace of God demonstrated in sending Jesus to be the Savior of the world; that grace being available to anyone who will believe.* What a happy thing it was for Paul to be the recipient of this good news! He said that it was a great privilege. He felt unworthy of the honor. As a matter of fact, he said that he was "less than the least of God's people." Now, when we look back on who Paul was, what he did and remember that he wrote almost half of the New Testament, we don't see him as unworthy. Yet, he told the Ephesians that he was. We might see this as false modesty, but would God use an arrogant person, who would fake modesty, like He used Paul? Somehow, we doubt that.

Paul knew that whatever good he did, whatever honor was his, whatever power his message had, was because of the greatness of the truth God had given him...the mystery of the grace of God. It should be that way with all of us. We can be more than we are by telling the good news of God's love.

Jonathan was just a kid with nothing to do but go to school and kick around the neighborhood in the afternoons. He was a bit shy and so he was never part of the "in crowd." Then one day, all that changed. There had been an announcement that a doctor would come to the neighborhood and give flu shots. A serious threat of a flu epidemic had been forecast, and everyone was wanting to avoid it. But, after looking for the doctor to show for days, the residents had almost given up hope. Then, a man in a white coat, called to Jonathan one afternoon saying, "Young man, could you spread the word around the neighborhood that Dr. Garcia is here and will give free flu shots at the recreation center." Jonathan began to run from door to door, knocking and inviting everyone to the recreation center. People noticed Jonathan for the first time and from that time on, when anyone wanted a message delivered, they called on Jonathan.

Paul was sure that the message he had to deliver was so important that he, even though he had physical

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problems, could tell people what they really needed to know. He knew that in his own power, he could not deliver the message well. However, he also knew that he didn't have to do it in his own strength. Too often Christians feel that they must do what God calls them to do with their own message and in their own strength. Paul knew that God had given him the best message of all and that God would give him the strength to deliver.

Was Paul the only one given this honor...the only one who knew the secret? No, there were many others. However, Paul is the one who led the missionary movement to the Gentiles. Some of his Christian-Jewish friends didn't think that it was a good idea. They thought that the new Gentile converts should participate in the Jewish rituals that would make them Jews as well as Christians. Years before Paul wrote Ephesians, he had gone to Jerusalem, to the center of the Christian church at that time, to argue for preaching to the Gentiles and not requiring them to become Jews first. He won the debate.

The second great opportunity that God gave Paul was this privilege of leading the missionary movement to the Gentiles. Up until the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas, the witness to the Gentiles had been very limited, and somewhat suspicious to the Christian Jews. Now, years later, Paul is rejoicing with the Ephesians about the privilege of preaching the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

A "missionary movement" is something that happens when someone begins to tell people about God and then others join in and still others join until many, many people are telling the story. It is kind of like a cheer that begins at one end of a football stadium and then others join until everyone on that side of the stadium is shouting and waving their hands.

The "unsearchable riches of Christ" describes God's love which sent Jesus to the world to be the sacrifice for our sin and to currently sit at God's right hand to speak to God on our behalf...our intercessor. It means God's gift of love, joy, peace, and hope, as well as God's assurance that Jesus is coming back to earth to take us to be with Him for all eternity.

Memory Verse: "Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Ephesians 3:8

*Underlined sentences in the Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

Student Worksheet

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Memory Verse: “Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Ephesians 3:8

>That mystery was the grace of God demonstrated in sending Jesus to be the _____ of the world; that grace being available to _____ who will believe

>Paul knew that whatever _____ he did, whatever honor was his, whatever _____ his message had, was because of the greatness of the _____ God had given him...the mystery of the _____ of God.

>Paul knew that God had given him the _____ message of all and that God would give him the _____ to deliver it.

>The second great opportunity that God gave Paul was this _____ of leading the missionary movement to the _____.

>The “unsearchable riches of Christ” describes God’s _____ which sent Jesus to the _____ to be the sacrifice for our _____ and currently sit at God’s right hand to speak to God on our _____. It means God’s gift of love, _____, peace, and _____, as well as God’s assurance that Jesus is coming back to earth to take us to be with Him for all _____.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be ready to live for him all the rest of your life.