

Diverse Wisdom

Long Beach Alliance Church
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Through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

~Ephesians 3:10 (ESV)

- 1) By Grace & Power: A Servant Of The Gospel of Jesus Christ**
 - A) Paul's message to the Ephesians is one of racial and cultural inclusion (Ephesians 2:14-22) which reaches its zenith in the revealing of the "mystery" which is "in Christ Jesus," the promise of the Gospel (3:6).
 - B) It's this Good News of unity and reconciliation which Jesus Christ provides between God and all those who will respond of which Paul has been notably "made a minister" (NIV, "servant," 3:7).
 - C) The relationship of a Christian to the Gospel is one of 'minister' or 'servant,' a person who has been intentionally given a gift for the benefit of others. We are all God's appointed Gospel agents, giving the Good News in the same manner we received it, by God's grace (3:7).
 - D) The appointment to the Gospel has been "given" (again, the "passive" receiving) as an act of God's power. God's grace is not passive, it is intentional, determined, and comes with power into our lives.
 - E) In Paul's case, the Gospel came in a particularly dramatic moment on the road from Jerusalem to Damascus (about 200 miles, Acts 9:1-19). But the drama of Paul's conversion is no less powerful as the experience for any follower of Christ (Romans 1:16-17)!
 - F) When we receive the grace of God's Gospel through faith in the work of Jesus Christ, we are definitively transformed for eternity. God graciously pardons the sinner, declaring us righteous saints (holy ones) by Christ's work, putting His own Holy Spirit within us, and adopting us as His own child and rightful heirs of Heaven! Salvation is God's power on display, an epic conversion into God's Eternal Kingdom!

2) Propelled From Leastest Because Of Gospel Greatness

- A) With God's power still in view, Paul marvels at the greatness of God's grace in his own life, despite his identity as "leastest" (NIV, 'less than the least,' Ephesians 3:8) among Christians because of Paul's pre-Christ-following life as a persecutor of the church (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:10).
- B) Even though Paul is acutely aware of his past persecution of Christ's beloved church, and an ongoing struggle against sin (cf. Romans 6:13), he is not distracted from proclaiming the "unsearchable riches of Christ" to unbelieving Gentiles (Ephesians 3:8).
- C) Does Paul allow his past to define him? He does not. He sets aside the sins of his past in light of Christ (cf. Philippians 3:13). Does Paul forget his past? He does not. Paul sees his past through the cross of Christ, saved for a passionate purpose (1 Corinthians 15:10).
- D) How then does Paul live? He keeps his head up and focused on the goal of living out his purpose in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14), bringing the Gospel to light for those in the dark (Ephesians 3:9).
- E) This is the life we are called to "join in imitating" (Philippians 3:17), not Paul himself, but faithful living in Christ Jesus! Our past sin does not define us, it can help inform us, and it should always remind us – our sin can never exceed the unfathomable riches of life in Christ Jesus! Eyes up and on the goal of a bright future in Christ Jesus!

3) God's Chosen People Reveal His Victorious Wisdom

- A) God's wisdom, which created all things (Genesis 1:1; Ephesians 3:9), has been to reveal His "manifold wisdom" through the church (3:10).
- B) God's wisdom is revealed "through" His Universal Church, the "nations, tribes, peoples, and languages" (Revelation 7:9) of God's people. The church reveals the splendor of His multi-faceted, variegated, multi-dimensional, and diversified wisdom (Ephesians 3:10).
- C) God's chosen agent for revealing His diverse wisdom is His church! The church is Christ's body in the world, revealing God's plan to bring all things together in unity under Christ (cf. 1:22; 1 Corinthians 15:25-28).
- D) The church is God's victorious announcement over all evil "rulers and authorities" (Ephesians 3:10, 6:12-13) under Christ Jesus! Our union with Christ declares His victorious glory against Satan through His church!