

## Believer's Boot Camp – Part 3

**Ephesians 3:2** - <sup>2</sup> if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, (*“dispensation” – “administration”* (Paul's role to the Gentiles) CEV - You have surely heard about God's gift of undeserved grace in choosing me to help you.

*“The administration of God's grace” – He had been assigned the special work of preaching the gospel to the gentiles, and so are we!!!*

*The Lord Jesus Christ has already defeated our Enemy hands down.*

However, He has left it up to us to enforce every day in earth's trenches the victory He has won in the Heavens.

The book of Ephesians serves as a Believers Boot Camp, *teaching us that the church is equipped with vast spiritual weaponry* to accomplish this very task.

- Victory is ours *if we fight* for it!
- Ephesians is serious training for serious Christians.

*When people become Christians* one of the hardest things to do is to RETRAIN them not to continue to operate according to the world's system.

It took one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but forty years to get Egypt out of them.

There is always a battle between the NEW MAN and the OLD MAN. And that is why we need teaching like Paul gives to us in Ephesians.

The attitude of WORSHIP we walk in daily is the classroom of the Holy Spirit.

*The more we cultivate a worshipful life, the more He can teach us His ways.*

- As we grow up in the Lord, we UNDERSTAND more, and we SURRENDER more.
- As we *remain faithful to God's Word* and follow *the leading of His Spirit*
- We will give up idols, put off sinful thinking, and crucify the flesh – over and repeatedly!
- As we reach new Revelation about God, our worship becomes RICHER.

When we consider **worship** in light of Ephesians, we can see **why Paul waits until chapter three** to declare that he is a **PRISONER**.

**Worship is different than praise!**

Because the worshipper has stepped beyond praising God **FOR THEIR CONDITION** to worshipping Him **FROM THEIR POSITION**.

**Paul wasn't forced to be a prisoner of Jesus – he chose to become that!**

**WORSHIP IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED IN “SERVICES” – RATHER, WORSHIP IS OUR “SERVICE” TO GOD.**

- The **MESSAGE** is far more important than the **MESSENGER**.
- In fact, **the messenger's life is just a CANVAS** for the message.

From the first moment of **his encounter with the Lord**, Paul **signed up for hardships**.

**Acts 9:5 NKJV** And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”

**Acts 9:5 AMP** Saul said, who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is dangerous and it will turn out bad for you to keep kicking against the goad (**to offer vain and perilous resistance.**)

**Acts 9:16** I will show him how much he must suffer for worshiping in my name.”

**Ephesians 3 - Paul's Mission to the Gentiles - 3:1** ***Christ Jesus made me his prisoner, so I could help you Gentiles.***

Paul was under house **arrest in Rome** for preaching about Christ.

Paul maintained **his firm belief that God was in control** of all history, **including all that happened to him!**

**? Do circumstances make you wonder if God has lost control of this world?**

**Remember no matter what happens, God is still in control!!!**

Paul had a ***Jewish PEDIGREE***, but he became a **PRISONER** on behalf of Gentiles **he wouldn't have even spoken to before he knew Jesus Christ!**

**3:2-3** *2 You have surely heard about God's gift of undeserved grace in choosing me to help you. 3 In fact, this letter tells you a little about how God has shown me his mysterious ways.*

The church is "**THE MYSTERY**" – *the carnal mind cannot understand it – unbelievers are supposed to think teachings of Scripture are ridiculous!*

**1 Corinthians 2:14** - *This is why only someone who has God's Spirit can understand spiritual blessings. Anyone who doesn't have God's Spirit thinks these blessings are foolish.*

**3:4** *As you read the letter, you will also find out how well I really do understand the mystery about Christ.*

In scripture, a mystery is not something "*hidden*", but something "*revealed.*"

*That is why a lifestyle of worship is foundational - And non-negotiable because it brings revelation to you!*

**3:5** *No one knew about this mystery until God's Spirit told it to his holy apostles and prophets.*

- We are highly PRIVILEGED to live in the CHURCH AGE.

**3:6** *And the mystery is this: Because of Christ Jesus, the good news has given the Gentiles a share in the promises God gave to the Jews. God has also let the Gentiles be part of the same body.*

- GOD BROKE ALL PROTOCOL IN SAVING THE GENTILES!

**Luke 14:16-24** - 16 Jesus told him: A man once gave a great banquet and invited a lot of guests. 17 When the banquet was ready, he sent a servant to tell the guests, "Everything is ready! Please come." 18 ***One guest after another started making excuses.*** The first one said, "I bought some land, and I've got to look it over. Please excuse me." 19 Another guest said, "I bought five teams of oxen, and I need to try them out. Please excuse me." 20 Still another guest said, "I've just now married, and I can't be there."

21 The servant told his master what happened, and the master became so angry he said, "Go as fast as you can to every street and alley in town! Bring in everyone who is poor or paralyzed or blind or lame." 22 When the servant returned, he

said, "Master, I've done what you told me, and there is still plenty of room for more people." 23 His master then told him, "**Go out along the back roads and make people come in**, so my house will be full. 24 Not one of the guests I first invited will get even a bite of my food!"

### **THREE CALLS TO THE FEAST:**

1. Them that were invited – ***the Jews***.
2. The poor or paralyzed or blind or lame – ***the Gentiles***.
3. Yet there is room - Go out along the back roads – ***last days revival!***

***3:7 God treated me with kindness. His power worked in me, and it became my job to spread the good news.***

- Paul is referring to **the miraculous moment of his conversion**.

***3:8 I am the least important of all God's people. But God was kind and chose me to tell the Gentiles that because of Christ there are blessings that cannot be measured.***

- ***I am the least important of all God's people.***
- **Paul stood in awe that God would save a murderer of Christians.**
- **And call him to be an Apostle! (We must decrease)**

***1 Corinthians 15:9 - For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.***

***1 Timothy 1:15 - This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.***

***3:9 God, who created everything, wanted me to help everyone understand the mysterious plan that had always been hidden in his mind.***

Revelation of the church hidden in the OT, but **even Gentiles who obeyed were blessed.**

**"Created everything" – the same God who brought a WORLD out of nothing brings His CHURCH out of nothing!**

**John 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him **nothing** was made that was made.**

**3:10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,**

- ***“the intent that NOW” – what was hidden before is revealed NOW.***

***God always reveals Himself, His principles, and His purposes progressively in stages.***

***You couldn't take it all at once, that's why God waited until NOW in your life. With God, timing is everything – catch His “proceeding” Word!***

**Matthew 4:4** But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds (continually) from the mouth of God.”

**Isaiah 55:11** so is my word that goes (continually) out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

When God says something, **His Word continues to work**; the same Word that delivered you still says ***“YOU SHALL LIVE...”***

**3:11** God did this according to his eternal plan. And he was able to do what he had planned because of **all Christ Jesus our Lord had done**.

***“Eternal purpose” – what happens to you as a child of God in TIME was predestined in ETERNITY –***

- **God didn't just redeem you in TIME, but in ETERNITY**
- Rev. 13:8 – “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

**GOD FIXED IT IN ETERNITY, AND THEN MANIFESTED IT IN TIME.**

***That's why it is only “a matter of time” before God brings me out of my trouble because He fixed it in eternity!***

**3:12** in Him we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

- “Boldness and access with confidence” **“by the faith OF HIM”** – we live by HIS FAITH!
- **By faith** we can enter directly into God's presence through prayer.
- **Don't** be afraid of God. **He wants to** hear from you!!

**Galatians 2:20** I have died, but Christ lives in me. And I now live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me.

The only thing still alive when Jesus went into the tomb was the words He had spoken **BY FAITH**.

Many times, our faith and confidence in the Word *is all we have* when we are buried in our trials!

And without the resurrection of Jesus, we would have no proof that “His faith” worked.

**John 2:19** Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”

**1 Corinthians 15:17** Unless Christ was raised to life, your faith is useless, and you are still living in your sins.

**3:13** This is why you should not be discouraged when I suffer for you. After all, it will bring honor to you.

If Paul had not preached the gospel, he would not be in jail... but then the Ephesians would not have heard the Good News & come to Jesus either....

- Tribulation for the gospel’s sake brings glory to God and to His church –
- Your tribulations are not only for you – your experiences impact others.

**2 Corinthians 4:17** For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

We are not going from battle to battle and from trial to trial,

- But we are going from revelation to revelation,
- from victory to victory, and from glory to glory!

**2 Timothy 1:8** - Not Ashamed of the Gospel - Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,

**2 Timothy 2:9** for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. **But God’s word is not chained.**

**You can't do anything in your own strength that has eternal benefits anyway!**

**3:14** For this reason I kneel before the father,

- “for this cause I bow” – Paul is in awe of the plan of God

**3:15** All beings in heaven and on earth receive their life from him.

- “The whole family” – the church is bigger than North America
- The church is also bigger than NOW.
- It reaches to the **PAST and the FUTURE...**
- The whole family *includes an innumerable host of* saints, and even the angels.
- **REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE NEVER WORSHIPPED ALONE!**

**Hebrews 12:1 - A Large Crowd of Witnesses** - Such a large crowd of witnesses is all around us! ***So we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially the sin that just won't let go.*** And we must be determined to run the race that is ahead of us.

**God knows how to use what we do and say today to bless someone around the world** – or even someone in “**the whole family**” in a future generation!

**3:16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man

- “Inner MAN” – not “inner child” – you are called to be MATURE, strengthened by God to be MATURE, and expected to be MATURE!

**3:17** that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- “dwell” – this means that Christ is not just living in our hearts, but that He is “feeling at home” in us!
- “Rooted and grounded” – securely fixed!

**3:18** may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, ***to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.***

**3:19** and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

“surpasses knowledge” – ***greater than*** what you can figure out!

There is ***no dysfunction*** in a child **who knows** *that they are truly loved* – **God’s love dispels our dependence** *on others for our happiness.*

**3:20** Now to him who can do ***immeasurably more than all*** we ask or imagine, **according** to his power that is at work within us,

“***Immeasurably more than all***” – English translators are struggling a bit here to give us the sense that **God’s power is “*over the top*”**

“**according**” – common word in Ephesians, meaning “***in harmony with***” –

*In the first two chapters* refers to something God or the devil did (in spirit realm) – **Here it is used to refer to something that *WE as the church allow! Hallelujah!!!***

**3:21** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

“**Amen**” – “***absolutely, unequivocally true***” – you can’t argue with a statement that has an “**Amen**” at the end of it!

**CLOSE:**

**2 Corinthians 1:20** For no matter how many ***promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.*** And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.

**Romans 16:20** **The God of peace** will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Amen.

**Revelation 22:20** **I Am Coming Quickly** - He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!