

“COME UP, GROW UP, & GET TO WORK! - Pt. 3”

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TEXT: Ephesians chapter 3.

INTRO: We're in a series of messages covering three primary themes in the book of Ephesians. You must *Come Up* (Eph. 2:6) to *Grow Up*, and you must *Grow Up* to effectively *Get to Work*. This morning we're going to work our way through chapter 3, the final message focusing on “*Come Up!*”

I. THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST (Eph. 3:1-13).

- A. Paul is writing this letter from prison (v. 1).
 - 1. Make the best of your situation!
- B. Paul had a calling & grace to minister to Gentiles and sought to be a good steward of that grace (vv. 2, 7).
- C. God made known by revelation to Paul the mystery of Christ (vv. 3-4; 1:17).
 - 1. This mystery was previously unknown (v. 5)!
 - 2. What is the mystery of Christ?
- D. The mystery of Christ is **that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel**, (v. 6)
 - 1. The Gentiles were now fellow heirs with Jews in Christ (see Gal. 3:7, 9, 14, 16, 26, 28-29)!
- E. Because Paul had persecuted the church before his conversion to Christ, he considered himself **“less than the least of all the saints, ...”** (v. 8)
 - 1. Diligently search out **“the unsearchable [incomprehensible] riches of Christ”** (v. 8b)!
- F. Paul believed that as he preached this mystery to the Gentiles, they would catch its revelation and enter into **“the fellowship” [partnership]** of this mystery – that they would experience it (v. 9)!
- G. One of God's purposes for the church is that we make known **“to the principalities & powers in the heavenly places” “the manifold (greatly diversified, multi-faceted) wisdom of God”** (vv. 10-11)!
 - 1. Remember, it's these principalities & powers we wrestle against (Eph. 6:12), but have authority over (Eph. 1:18-21)!
 - 2. In Christ **“we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.”** (3:12; Heb. 4:16)
- H. In light of this mystery and the church's calling, Paul encourages these believers not to get discouraged at the tribulations he is currently going through, which is for their benefit (v. 13).
 - 1. Notice that Paul seems more concerned about their response to his tribulation than its effect on him personally!

II. PAUL'S 2nd PRAYER FOR THE BELIEVERS (3:14-21)

- A. Paul bows his knees & prays to the Father (v. 14-15).
- B. Paul prays that:
 - 1. That God will strengthen their inner man (spirit & soul) with His might through His Spirit (v. 16).
 - a. This is the mighty power Paul prayed for in 1:15-23.
 - 2. That Christ will dwell in their hearts through faith (v. 17a).
 - 3. That they will be rooted & grounded in love (v. 17b).
 - 4. That they will comprehend the vastness of the love of Christ (vv. 18-19a).
 - 5. That they will be filled with all the fullness of God (v. 19b)!

CONCLUSION: God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all this by His power working in us (vv. 20-21)!