

The Dispensation Of The Grace Of God

Eph. 3:2

Introduction:

- A. Paul was given “the dispensation of the grace of God”
 - 1. *Dispensation* means “stewardship” (cf. 1 Cor. 9:17)
 - 2. *Grace* is “unmerited favor” bestowed on one.
 - a. It may be a gift. (cf. Eph. 2:7,8)
 - b. It may be a privilege (Eph. 3:2,8; 2 Cor. 8:1,2,7)
- B. Paul’s “dispensation” had three parts as explained in Eph 3:

Discussion:

II. The Grace to *Possess* the Gospel (vv. 1-7)

- A. The receiving of this grace.
 - 1. Apostles and prophets received it by revelation (vv. 3,5; cf. 1 Cor. 2:12,13; Gal. 1:11,12).
 - 2. Others receive it by hearing (or reading) them. (v. 4 cf. Rom. 10:17)
- B. The greatness of this grace.
 - 1. To know things that were “a mystery”. (vs. 4,5,9)
 - a. Things that are “unsearchable” (v. 8)
 - b. Things “eye had not seen, nor ear heard” (1 Cor. 2:7-10)
 - c. Things the O.T. prophets and angels wanted to know. (1 Pet. 1:8-12)
 - 2. To know that all men can be heirs of God. (v. 6)
 - 3. To know about the body of Christ. (v. 6; cf. 1:22,23)
 - 4. To know about being a partaker of God’s great promise. (v. 6; Gal. 3:29).

III. The Grace to *Preach* the Gospel (vv. 8-13)

- A. A necessity, yet a grace with no room to boast. (1 Cor. 9:16-18 cf. Eph. 2:8,9).
- B. Preach so that all may see:
 - 1. Christ and the church in God’s eternal purpose (vv. 9-12)
 - 2. That there is no need to faint (lose heart) during trouble. (v. 13)

IV. The Grace to *Practice* the Gospel (vv. 14-20)

- A. The “bowed knee” symbolizes worship and submission (cf. Rom. 11:4 cf. Phil. 2:8-12).
- B. The “bowed knee” recognizes God’s authority and greatness.
 - 1. Bow in service and obedience under the gospel.
 - 2. Bow in honor and praise of Him under the gospel.
- C. Paul’s “bowed knee” here likely in prayer (v. 16ff).
 - 1. His prayer for the Ephesians. (vv. 16-19)
 - 2. His praise of God. (vv. 20-21)

Conclusion:

- A. What a marvelous grace God to possess, preach and practice the gospel!
- B. What are we to do about this marvelous grace? (4:1)