

Of This Gospel
Ephesians 3:7-13

I. Intro

- A. Next week, a family meeting that will help us prepare for the future of ministry in our community
 - 1. This will be a celebration, worship, Bible teaching, and challenge from God
 - 2. I hope you all come, and make it work for a special day.
- B. North Park is poised to launch into the next chapter of ministry in our community, but we must not rest in our recent successes, that is the past, we look to future community outreach and ministry.
- C. Today: This is a beautiful passage, building up to a beautiful truth that blows my mind
- D. Next week's text is one of my favorites, and I look forward to all that God does through it.

II. Text

- A. Verse 7:
 - 1. Lots of gospel explanation in the first half of the letter.
 - 2. He is bringing the Divine Imperative to a pinnacle point
- B. Verses 8-10
 - 1. The gospel is not about an individual or a personality other than Jesus
 - 2. Paul saw himself as the least...
 - 3. But Grace was given to do a work:
 - a) To preach to the gentiles
 - b) To bring light for everyone
 - c) To strengthen the church
- C. Verses 11-12
 - 1. All done according to eternal purpose
 - 2. To give fallen humanity confidence and boldness through Christ
- D. Verse 13
 - 1. So that you don't lose heart
 - 2. He is suffering for the gentiles and the cause of Christ

III. Point

- A. According to the Gift
 - 1. Made a minister
 - 2. Sent with power, though unworthy of such power
 - 3. Self Identification:
 - a) Our culture is allowing self identification and self determination to be accepted and approved.
 - b) This is a direct affront to scripture and to Biblical ideals
 - c) The scriptures teach us that we are identified as fallen humanity, and enemies of God, and this is redeemed by Jesus
 - 4. The gift we have been given comes with power.
 - a) The power of God is at work in you and through you.
 - b) You have been blessed with this beautiful ministry.
- B. Unsearchable riches of Christ
 - 1. Bring to light the plan: gentile salvation, seems mundane for us today, but revolutionary then
 - a) Acts 10 and Acts 15 deal with this specifically
 - b) The apostles were confronted with this truth by God, and still struggled with it in their hearts and minds
 - c) But it didn't change the facts
 - 2. He created all things:
 - a) Seems to be an oddly placed note of creation, but is a reminder of who is in charge

- b) Its HIS truth, therefore we should embrace it, not matter our opinion of that truth.
- 3. HIS TRUTH
 - a) We need a reminder every day that God's will and plan are for us and for our blessing in service to HIM.
 - b) We also need to be reminded that HIS blessing is for a larger purpose than any of us could have individually.
 - c) We are not meant to be individuals, we are meant to be in and a part of the body
 - d) This is a blessing to us and for us, but the purposes are not for us alone to be blessed
 - e) We are created to serve, and to fulfill His purpose.
- C. According to the eternal purpose
 - 1. Boldness and access with confidence
 - 2. Through faith we find it a blessing to go before the Lord
 - 3. After all the talk in the first two chapters of how we are saved by God, for God, we are now reminded that we are also blessed in the process.
 - 4. This is one of the reasons I teach verse by verse, because if we took this passage out of the context intended in scripture, we would be very self serving and longing for what we "get" out of this relationship.
 - 5. We "Get" good gifts, but for the purposes of God alone.
 - 6. The blessing of this relationship is that we are blessed while we are allowed to be a blessing!
 - 7. You are created in Christ with an eternal purpose, and I ask you not to lose heart in this process.
 - 8. Which is your Glory: such a strange way to end this thought...
 - a) Our glory is that many suffered so others could know this blessing
 - b) Our glory is that life is blessed because others struggled
 - c) Now we take that cost of discipleship and invest it in the next generation!
 - d) What a blessing! What Glory!
- IV. Close
 - A. You have been given much by HOLY GOD
 - B. You have been blessed by the ministry of the saints that have gone before you
 - C. Now we take that as a responsibility to be the same for the next generation of believers to follow in.

[Eph 3:7-13 ESV] 7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. 8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, 10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. 13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.