

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

May 2013

Ephesians: God's Plan For His Church

Lesson #5: Paul's Calling

INTRODUCTION

Who do you know that is obviously living out their calling?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Ephesians 3:1-11

Note: Paul was under house arrest when he wrote this (Act 28:16, 30). In Greek (the language in which Paul originally wrote this letter) the term mystery is something that is humanly impossible to understand by reasoning, but once revealed (by God) it is plain for all to see. Even though Paul spent enough time in Ephesus for everyone to know his passion for the Gentiles, he is writing for the new people in the church. He may also expect this letter to become a "circular" that would be passed among the other churches.

1. Why does Paul consider himself a prisoner of Jesus Christ? Isn't he in a Roman prison? v.1 2 Tim 1:8
2. What would the Ephesians have heard about Paul? Vv. 2-3
3. What is the mystery that was revealed to Paul? Rom 11:25, 16:25-26; Col 1:25-26
4. Why is that such a radical thought for a strict Jew like Paul?
5. How would you respond if a church leader told you they have a new revelation that would radically change your church?
6. Was Paul uniquely called or is this something every believer should expect? Eph 4:1
7. Why did Paul say that he was "less than the least of all people?" v. 8

Note: The closer one comes to a holy God, the more one's sins become evident. 1 Tim 1:15

8. How do you feel about being part of God's plan and purpose that is so beautiful that even rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms take notice? v. 10

Note: "Manifold" can also be called variegated or multifaceted such as the way that many facets of a diamond reflect and enhance its beauty. "Heavenly realms" implies a spiritual struggle of war with God in heaven. Eph 6:12

9. What difference does it make to you that you can approach God with freedom and confidence?
10. What is Paul's attitude about his present suffering? vs. 13 How was this an encouragement to the Ephesians? What can we learn from his attitude?

APPLICATION

What is your calling that is independent of your current job or profession? Eph 2:10

We are inclined to forget the deeply spiritual and supernatural touch of God. The realization of the call on a person's life may come like a clap of thunder or it may dawn gradually. But however quickly or slowly this awareness comes, it is always accompanied with an undercurrent of the supernatural – something that is inexpressible and produces a "glow." If man or woman is called of God, it doesn't matter how difficult the circumstances may be. God orchestrates every force at work for His purposes.

My Utmost for His Highest, Oswald Chambers, Sep 29