Ephesians 3:1-13

## The Mystery Unfolds

* Jesus suffered on our behalf. God also allowed Paul to suffer on our behalf (Eph 3:1, 13; Col 1:24-25). How was Paul’s suffering different than Christ’s, but still important? Who else has carried more than their share so that we could benefit from the truth of Scripture? What might that effort be worth in the Kingdom of God?
* Paul suffered and struggled with some fellow Jewish Believers for the truth that Gentiles could be fellow heirs and members of the Body of Messiah (Eph 3:6). Ironically, the Gentile church later demanded that Jews abandon being Jewish in order to follow the Jewish Messiah. In what subtle ways do we ask others to be more American, middle class, suburban, etc., that suits us in order to claim their inheritance in Christ? Why is that wrong? See Luke 17:1-3.
* How can believers from other cultures help us see how many American values we have added to the Gospel we preach? What are some good ways to meet believers from other cultures? Have you experienced that? What did you learn? What will you do to get outside your comfort zone and see what God is doing in the marketplace?
* Have you ever taken the opportunity to go above and beyond what you initially thought you were committed to in order to help others grow up in Christ? How did God bless you for taking that on? How did he change you?
* The Church is God’s message to the evil spiritual powers in the heavenly realms that their power is broken and they are defeated. Discuss the ramifications of being God’s display for the seen and unseen world (Eph 3:9-11; 1 Pet 1:10-12). What does that say about how important your everyday life is? If we are that critical in God’s plan, how then should we live?