

Session Five (3:1-21):

A Note on Structure:

1. Paul's thought in 3:1 connects to 3:14-21. However, 3:2-13 interrupts the thought began in 3:1 and continued in 3:14, tying together 3:2-13 and 3:14-21.
 - a.
2. How is this digression (3:2-13) connected to what precedes it?
 - a. Compare 1:9-10 with 3:3
 - i.
 - ii. ⁹ making known^[a] to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. **(1:9-10).**
 - iii. ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. **(3:3)**
 - iv.
 - b. Compare 1:13-14 with 3:6.
 - i.
 - ii. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee^[a] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,^[a] to the praise of his glory. **(1:13-14)**
 - iii. ⁶ This mystery is^[a] that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. **(3:6)**
 - iv.
 - c. Compare 2:5-6, 19, 22 with 3:6
 - i.
 - ii. ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,^[a] but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by^[a] the Spirit. **(2:5-6, 19, 22)**
 - iii. ⁶ This mystery is^[a] that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. **(3:6)**

The Wisdom of God's Salvation (3:1-13):

1. What is the stewardship/ administration of God's grace in 3:2?
 - a.
2. What is 3:5 referring to? Did God's plan of salvation change? Cf. 3:9,11.

- a.
3. What new privileges do the Gentiles now have? See 3:6.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What are the unsearchable treasures of Christ? See Eph. 3:8.
 - a.
5. When else did Paul refer to wisdom in Ephesians? See 1:17.
 - a.
6. How is it that this wisdom would be shown to the rulers and authorities? See 3:10.
 - a. L
7. When was rule and authority mentioned in Ephesians? See 1:21.
 - a.
8. How can Paul say that his suffering – imprisonment in this case – is for the Ephesians' glory? See 3:13. cf. Acts 9:16.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

For this Reason (3:14-21):

1. Since this section is tied to 3:2-13, the “for this reason” refers back before them both to 2:11-22. For what reason is Paul praying before the Father?
 - a.
2. Yet, we also see many parallels between Paul's first prayer in 1:15-23 and his prayer here in 3:14-21. How is it that this second prayer invites public praying, while the first prayer was more private? See especially 3:20.
 - a.
3. How should we understand 3:17, especially that “Christ dwells in your hearts through faith?”
 - a.
 - b.

Take Home:

1. Consider how God's grace is equally for all people – regardless of tribe, color, economic status, etc.
2. Reflect on how God has given we Gentiles a share in his inheritance, membership in the body of Christ, and an equal share in the promises he made to Abraham.
3. Pray, even as Paul prays, in response to this incredible revelation from God.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, how unsearchable are your ways: that you would extend your promise to the Jews to all nations, that you would take Paul, the persecutor of your church, and make him bear and share the mystery of your salvation plan in Christ. Grant us humility and gratitude for your grace. In Jesus' name, amen.