

COMMUNITY GROUP WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE
WEEK OF JUNE 1, 2009

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS
Mystery Revealed

"Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith – to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

–The Apostle Paul's Doxology, Romans 16:24-27

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Deuteronomy 29:29

THIS WEEK'S TEXT
Ephesians 3:1-13

RELATED TEXTS TO EXPLORE

Deut 29:29; Rom 11:25, 16:24-27; Col 1:24-29; 1 Pet 1:12; Eph 2:18; 1 Cor 15:9; Acts 9, 22 & 26

STUDY GUIDE

- **What observations can be made about:**
 - Paul's civic status and how it relates to the Ephesian church (v.1)
 - The nature of Paul's conversion
 - The progressive revelation of the Gospel
 - The effects of God's power (v.7 – see also Acts 9)
 - The means of God's revelation of his wisdom
 - The purpose of God's revelation of his wisdom
 - Our means of access to God (see also Heb 10)
 - Paul's suffering in relationship to these Christians' glory
- **What does each of these things mean? What did they mean for the church at Ephesus then, what do they mean for us now?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Use any or as many of these questions as will be helpful for your discussion.

- What has God spoken to you about this week regarding the sermon or passage?
- What does this passage reveal to us about Jesus?
- How does this passage enhance our understanding of the Gospel?
- What does this text mean for us as a community? Individually? How does it free us to be the people God intends for us to be?
- How do we need to live out the meaning of this text in our city?
- Why is a Gospel community necessarily a "community on mission"? Does your experience of community look more like a "bank" or a "mint"?
- What cost are you willing to incur in living as a follower of Jesus – as one who is "sent out" to the culture? What cost are you willing to incur in order to experience true community?
- What is an example of a message that you couldn't help but tell people? With what are you most "besotted"?
- (Illustration: *What About Bob* dinner scene – <http://tinyurl.com/ck9wmr>)
- To what extent would you need to see and savor Jesus before you'd be equally unabashed in sharing his message?

"Life consists in penetrating the unknown, and fashioning our actions in accord with the new knowledge thus acquired."

- Leo Tolstoy

MEMORY VERSES

Last Week: Eph 2:19-20

This Week: Eph 3:10-11

PRAYER FOCUS

For the Vision and Direction of the church (May):

Apostles Church wants to be a people who intentionally connect others to Jesus. We will authentically, compassionately and intelligently dialogue with the culture about the Gospel of Jesus.

In Response to the Text:

- Thanking God for those who suffer for the Gospel
- Asking God to give perseverance, joy, boldness and courage to those currently imprisoned for their public proclamation of the Gospel
- Thanking God for making the mystery of Jesus Christ known to us through the gospel and for including people from every nation in his saving covenant promise
- Asking for grace to share the "unsearchable riches of Christ" with our City
- Thanking Jesus that because of him we can have confidence in our access to God
- Asking God to illumine our minds to see clearly the beauty of his Son, the power of his working and the glorious riches of our inheritance - that we would marvel over those things

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION

- *Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ*– John Piper
- *The Radical Reformation*– Mark Driscoll
- *The Pursuit of God*– A.W. Tozer
- *The Cost of Discipleship*– Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* - J.I. Packer
- *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*– Mark Denver
- *How to Share Your Faith*– Greg Laurie

NEXT WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 3:14-21