

## **The Unsearchable Riches of Christ Ephesians 3:8-13 (NKJV)**

8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. 13 Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

This week we will gather with friends and loved ones to celebrate Thanksgiving once again.

Most people will thank God for the turkey, the dressing, the cranberry sauce, and of course the pumpkin pie.

Oh we will thank Him for bringing us through another year; for giving us the health we have and for the financial prosperity we enjoy.

But very few will thank Him for the unsearchable riches that we have in Jesus Christ; some because they will not think of that, but others because they are not concerned with such things.

The problem with most people is that we are concerned with the things that we can touch, taste or feel.

But for the Christian, their greatest riches are in Jesus Christ. Things like free grace, forgiveness of sin, access to God in prayer, being placed into God's family as His sons and daughters. For the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives and for His word to give a light to our way.

So as we think toward Thanksgiving let us look at what Paul says about our unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus.

- I. The unsearchable riches were Paul's to preach.
  - A. Although he was the least of all saints.
    1. Paul was a very humble man.
    2. He and once been consumed with pride as a Pharisee but all that was ripped away when he found Jesus Christ.
    3. That is what grace does.
    4. It removes all traces of pride and self-sufficiency
    5. When necessary Paul had defended his apostolic office.
      - a. 2 Cor. 11: 5 ¶ For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. 6 Even though I am untrained in speech,

yet I am not in knowledge. But we have been thoroughly manifested among you in all things.

6. But he understood that the office was given him through the grace of God.
    - a. 1Ti 1:15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.
  - B. The position of a preacher of the riches of Christ Jesus was given to him by grace.
    1. Paul never forgot how and where God intervened in his life.
    2. On the road to Damascus to persecute Christians, which was to persecute Jesus Christ.
    3. But God had saved him from that life and had sent him to go to the Gentiles to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus.
  - C. What does this refer to?
    1. It is what he has been talking about already.
    2. How that God had chosen to bring salvation by grace to the Gentiles.
    3. How that God had predestined them to the adoption of sons.
    4. How that God had secured the forgiveness of their sins through the sacrifice of His Son.
    5. How He has made us accepted in the Beloved.
    6. How He provided redemption through His blood.
    7. How He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself.
    8. How that in Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will
    9. How we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.
    10. Now we know that this list is not finished because His riches are what? Unsearchable.
- II. All this is the mystery we spoke of last week.
- A. Verse 9, “and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through

Jesus Christ”

- III. And even the angels benefit from this.
  - A. To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places
    - 1. The principalities and powers here refers to the angles.
    - 2. They were created before the material things were.
    - 3. And they witnessed the material creation and worshiped God for what they saw.
  - B. But their ultimate praise is reserved for what they have been witnessing since the time of Jesus Christ.
    - 1. 1Pe 1:12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things which angels desire to look into.
    - 2. The sublime plan of the gospel of the grace of God, which is so entirely beyond the scope of our natural faculties that we could never by searching have found it out, appears to have been equally beyond the grasp of angelic intelligence — a mystery that aroused their wistful enquiry — until by the church (that is to say, by the divine counsel and conduct in forming and perfecting the church) there is made known to them the manifold wisdom of God as they have never learned it before. Spurgeon, *Angelic Studies*
  - C. They have witnessed the wholesale distribution of God’s grace in saving both Jews and Gentiles.
  - D. They have witnessed the combining of both Jew and Gentiles in the church as common heirs of God.
  - E. They have seen the marvelous grace that was necessary to bring both Jews and Gentiles into the church to work together as equals.
  - F. And thus the church, according to Paul here, has been teaching the angels and giving them cause, once again to praise God, and Jesus Christ.
- IV. All according to God’s eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus.
  - A. God does nothing on the spur of the moment.
  - B. All this might have been kept secret but it was all according to His purpose.
  - C. That is why we can have confidence and boldness in our access to our Father in heaven.
- V. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

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