

# Ephesians: Unsearchable riches of Christ

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## Study 15: The Church on Display

**READ** Eph 3:8-13 and **LISTEN** to Pastor Craig Baxter's [sermon](#).

When the secular historian studies history they do so through the lens of power and influence, for it is through these that events occur that impact our lives. But the Bible takes a different perspective. It views history past, present and future through the focal lens of God's redemptive plan fulfilled through His church. The Apostle Paul, in our passage, tells us that the church has the privilege of receiving God's plan and of displaying the fulfillment of this plan to both earth and heaven.

**Main lesson:** As the church lives out the gospel, despite circumstances, we display the manifold wisdom of God's eternal plan to cosmic powers and promote God's glory

### Questions:

1. Why does Paul call himself "the least of all the saints" (v. 8)? See also 1 Tim 1:15; 1 Cor 15:9. How did this view of self not hinder his ministry but empower it?
2. What are the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (v. 8) Paul preached? See Eph 1:7; Col 1:27.
3. What is "the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God" (v. 9; cf. v 11)? Try to explain this in one clear sentence. See 2:11-16; 3:6.
4. Who does the "rulers and authorities" refer to (v. 10)? See Eph 6:11-12.

5. A. What is the role of the church (v. 10) and how does knowing this cause us to have a high view of the church? How does Job's story in Job 1 help us?

B. How would this church be different if you got a vision of God's eternal purpose? Be specific and practical.

C. What practical effect would it have if Christians realized that their daily behaviour was revealing something to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places?

6. If someone asked you, "Why did God permit evil in this world?" what would be your response?

7. A. How can this lesson encourage you to persevere in the faith and not lose heart? What part might prayer play in this (v. 12)? See Heb 4:14-16.

B. Prayer is not an intercom to call the maid for more refreshments, but a walkie-talkie to the general from the front lines for more resources for the battle (adapted from John Piper). How can this change your prayer life?

### STOP AND PRAY:

**Praise:** God for His manifold wisdom in setting forth His redemptive plan of salvation

**Thank:** the Lord for making the mystery of His plan known to the church

**Pray:** that you would live in faith & perseverance, showing God's plan has not failed