

**“THE SACRED SECRET OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST”**

**EPHESIANS 3:1-21**

**INTRO:** It is very significant that every born-again believer has a **BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST** if they want to honor God in effective service and worship. **THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST IS HIS REDEMPTIVE REPRESENTATIVE ON EARTH** which is revealed through the ministry of the **LOCAL CHURCH AND THE INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN**. To enable us to understand the **CHURCH** more thoroughly, in our last study we noted **“THE PROSPECT OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST.”** Today as we continue in our series, we shall study **“THE SACRED SECRET OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST.”** What am I talking about and why do I use the words **“SACRED SECRET?”** Well, a study of Ephesians 3 today will enable you to understand why those terms are used and why they **MUST BE UNDERSTOOD BY ALL BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS.**

**NOTE:** In Ephesians 3, we see the **IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH IN RELATION TO PAUL (VS.1), THE GENTILES (VSS,6-8), THE HEAVENLY HOSTS (VS 10), THE CHRISTIANS TODAY (VSS. 11-22).**

**OBSERVATION:** **Our study today may seem to be somewhat elementary, but due to the fact that many misunderstand or misapply the church these days, it is a VERY SIGNIFICANT STUDY FOR US TO CONDUCT. So, let’s give the WORD OF GOD OUR FULL ATTENTION AS WE STUDY.**

**I. THE PRESENTATION OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST – VSS. 1-4**

**A. Paul Explains His Calling – Vss. 1-4**

**(To Reveal the SACRED SECRET of the CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST)**

**OBSERVATION OF VERSE ONE:**

1) “For this cause” – This is a reference back to chapter 2:11-22 concerning the Jew and the Gentile coming together into one body through Faith in Christ.

2) “Prisoner of Jesus Christ for your Gentiles” – Paul was in prison in Rome as he wrote Ephesians due to preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles (2 Timothy 1:11,12).

1. Paul was given a Special Dispensation (Stewardship) – Vs. 2

-Paul’s administration of stewardship was that God had entrusted him to **PREACH THE GOSPEL OF GRACE** to the **GENTILES**.

-Observed in his calling – Acts 13

-Referred to in 2 Timothy 2:11

**THIS WAS A SPECIAL CALL TO MINISTRY THAT CHANGED THE WORLD!**

2. Paul was given a Special Comprehension – Vss. 3,4

a. God revealed the **TRUTH** (Understanding) of the **SACRED SECRET OF THE CHURCH** directly to Paul in Arabia – (Galatians 1:11-17) – Vs. 3

**NOTE:** The word “REVELATION” means “UNVEILING OR TO REMOVE THE COVER.

b. God made Paul an authority concerning **CHURCH TRUTH** – Vs. 4

**NOTE:** Paul informed the Ephesians of his understanding of the church.

**B. Paul Explains the Church – Vss. 5-12**

1. The Concept of the Church was withheld in the O.T. – Vs. 5a

2. The Concept of the Church was revealed in the N.T. – Vs. 5b-12

**NOTE:** The “Holy Apostles and Prophets” were special gifted people by God to lay the foundation and to establish the church. (Ephesians 4:11)

- The Apostles – Those Commissioned by Christ to found the church.

- The Prophets – Those Commissioned by Christ to reveal the truth of the Church.

**THE CHURCH IS SO SPECIAL IN THE EYES OF THE LORD THAT HE SELECTED SPECIAL PEOPLE TO LAY DOWN AND REVEAL THE TRUTH OF THE CHURCH.**

a. The Pattern of the Church – Vss. 6-9

-That Believing Jews and Gentiles would become the **MEMBERS** of the **SAME BODY (THE CHURCH)** through faith in Jesus Christ. **This was NOT revealed in the OT.**

- b. The Portrait of the Church – Vss. 10-12  
1) To Show God’s Wisdom to Spiritual beings – Vs. 10  
2) To Show God’s Work through Christ – Vss. 11,12

**THE CHURCH IS THE BASTION OF TRUTH OF GOD TO THE WORLD AND THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE – 1 TIMOTHY 3:15**

## **II. THE PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST – VSS. 13-19**

### **PAUL’S SPECIAL PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH**

- A. Prayer for Spiritual Strength – Vs. 16 – That the “inner person” of each believer would be strong.  
B. Prayer for Spiritual Stability – Vs. 17 – That Christ would be central in each believer’s life.  
C. Prayer for Spiritual Sense – Vss. 18,19 – That believers would understand the love of Christ fully.

**AS PAUL PRAYED THIS PRAYER FOR THE EPHESIANS, WE SHOULD PRAY THIS PRAYER FOR EACH OTHER TODAY.**

## **III. THE POWER OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST – VSS. 20,21**

**NOTE:** This is a DOXOLOGY (a formular of praise to God), not just to be said or sung, but is a principle to understand – **GOD IS ABLE AND WILLING TO GIVE THE CHURCH ALL THE POWER IT NEEDS TO DO ITS WORK ON EARTH.**

- **EXCEEDING** – “That which surpasses all things.”
- **ABUNDANTLY** – “That which is superabundant and excessive.”
- **ABOVE-** “That which is superior.”
- **ALL** – “Everything that exists.”

### **GOD’S POWER AT WORK IN THE CHURCH IS MORE THAN WE CAN IMAGINE!**

- A. The Identification of the Power – God’s promised power to the church  
B. The Reception of the Power – Through the Indwelling Holy Spirit  
C. The Application of the Power – Through yielding to the Holy Spirit  
D. The Anticipation of the Power – Through expecting God to grant the power

**GOD’S POWER WILL GIVE THE CHURCH ALL IT NEEDS TO DO HIS WORK ON EARTH!**

- 1) To Fulfill the Great Commission – Acts 1:8  
2) To Uphold the Truth of God – 1 Timothy 3:15  
3) To Worship and Glorify God – Philippians 3:3

**NOTE:** **THE CHURCH WITHOUT THE POWER OF GOD IS JUST ANOTHER WORLDLY ORGANIZATION THAT WILL FAIL GOD – NO LIFE, NO JOY, NO FRUIT, NO GLORY AND HONOR TO GOD. THE CHURCH WITH THE POWER OF GOD WILL PLEASE GOD AND WILL HAVE LIFE, JOY, FRUIT, AND WILL HONOR AND GLORIFY GOD.**

**EVERY CHRISTIAN AND EVERY LOCAL CHURCH CAN AND WILL DO GREAT THINGS FOR GOD WHEN SELF POWER AND PLANS ARE FORSAKEN AND WHEN GOD’S WORD IS OBEYED AND PUT INTO PRACTICE IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE AND MINISTRY.**

### **ACCESSING GOD’S POWER IN THE CHURCH**

- 1) Requires personal evaluation**
- 2) Requires the confession of sin**
- 3) Requires understanding God’s Truth**
- 4) Requires obedience to God’s Truth**
- 5) Requires TRUE WORSHIP AND PRAISE**

### ***LESSON AND APPLICATION***

As individual Christians we are members of the ETERNAL BODY OF CHRIST, the SACRED SECRET OF GOD NOW REVEALED TO MANKIND and are to represent and present CHRIST TO THE WORLD. THE MORE WE UNDERSTAND THE BEAUTY OF THE CHURCH AND APPLY GOD'S POWER TO THE CHURCH, THE MORE THE CHURCH WILL BE AND DO WHAT GOD DESIRES. ***THIS BEGINS WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN! THIS IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL TO OUR MINISTRY IN THE DAYS IN WHICH WE LIVE!***