

## “The Unsearchable Riches Of Christ”

Ephesians 3:8

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ”

## Ephesians 3:8

- Three Things:
  - What Paul says about himself.
  - What Paul says about his work.
  - What Paul says about the great subject of his preaching.

## What Paul Says About Himself Ephesians 3:8

*“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints.”*

- Paul was a persecutor:
  - Acts 8:1 Held the garments of those who stoned Stephen. cf. Acts 22:19-22
  - Acts 8:3 Laid waste the church.
  - Acts 9:1 Breathed threatening and slaughter.
  - 1 Timothy 1:12-15 Considered himself chief of sinners.
  - 1 Corinthians 15:9-10 Least of the apostles.
  - Acts 26:9; cf. 23:1 Honorable motives

## What Paul Says About Himself Ephesians 3:8

*“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints.”*

- Paul the *“steward” NKJV (dispensation)* of the grace of God.

## What Paul Says About Himself Ephesians 3:8

*“Was this grace given...”*

Verses 2,7,8; *1 Corinthians 9:17 “I have a stewardship intrusted to me.”*

- Note: Paul commended the Ephesian Elders to the *“word of his grace...” Acts 20:32*
- 1 Timothy 1:14; cf. Romans 5:20-21 The grace of God ... *“Abounded exceedingly.”*

## What Paul Says About His Work Ephesians 3:8

*“To preach unto the Gentiles.”*

- Paul preached to the Jews. Acts 13:14ff; 17:1-2
- He turned to the Gentiles. Acts 13:46-48
- Apostle to the Gentiles. Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:16-23

## What Paul Says About His Work Ephesians 3:8

*“To preach unto the Gentiles.”*

- What an honor. 1 Timothy 1:11-12
- What a responsibility.
  - Must preach it right. 2 Timothy 4:2-4
  - Must preach it in its fullness. Acts 20:26-27
  - No more, no less. Galatians 1:6
  - Jeopardize our soul and those who hear. 1 Timothy 4:16; cf. James 3:1

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

*“The unsearchable riches of Christ.”*

- Definition: (Greek *anexichniastos*) *“not tracked out, i.e. (by implication) untraceable” (Strong’s)*

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

*“The unsearchable riches of Christ.”*

- *Job 5:8-9 “But as for me, I would seek unto God, And unto God would I commit my cause; Who doeth great things and unsearchable, Marvellous things without number.”*
- *Psalms 145:3 “Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.”*

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

- *Isaiah 40:28 “Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding.”*
- *Romans 11:33 “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!”*
- *Note: Isaiah 55:8-9; 1 Peter 1:10-12; Ephesians 3:10*

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

1. *Ephesians 1:9 “make known unto us the mystery of His will.”*
2. *Ephesians 3:3 “Was made known unto me the mystery...”*
3. *Ephesians 3:4 “...my understanding in the mystery...”*
4. *Ephesians 3:9 To make all men see the “dispensation of the mystery.”*
5. *Ephesians 5:32 The “mystery is great” as it compares the husband / wife relationship to “Christ and the church.”*
6. *Ephesians 6:19 “the mystery of the gospel” points to God’s plan of redeeming man from sin and death.*

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

Definition: *“mystery.” (Greek *musterion*)*

- “a hidden purpose or counsel; secret will; of men ... In the NT, God’s plan of providing salvation for men through Christ, which was once hidden but now is revealed: Romans 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:26” (Thayer)
- “... may be best illustrated by the following passage: *‘the mystery which hath been hid from all ages and generations: but now hath it been manifested to His saints’*” *Colossians 1:26 (Vine)*

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

God's redemptive plan was hidden, now been revealed.

1. Ephesians 3:3,4,5, 9; Great redemptive plan of salvation to Jews and Gentiles. cf. Romans 3:9, 23-26
2. 1 Corinthians 2:7-13
3. *Romans 16:25-27* "Now to him that is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith: to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen."

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

*"Riches of Christ."*

Wealth, abundance. Romans 5:20-21

They are a fountain, which however many draw from its waters, never runs dry.

"that which is most precious is also boundless - riches of compassion and love, of merit, of sanctifying, comforting, and transforming power, all without limit, and capable of satisfying every want, craving, and yearning of the heart, now and evermore." (The Pulpit Commentary)

## What Paul Says About The Subject Of His Preaching – Ephesians 3:8

*"Riches of Christ."*

Wealth, abundance. Romans 5:20-21

"the plans he had formed, ... the innumerable providences which he had combined, to prepare, mature, and bring to full effect and view his gracious designs in the salvation of a ruined world, by the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of his Son. There were in these schemes and providences such riches-such an abundance, such a variety, as could not be comprehended..." (Adam Clarke)

## Conclusion

- What do you think of yourself? cf. Romans 12:3
- Have you come to see yourself as a sinner, lost? Romans 3:23, 26
- What do you think about the preaching of the gospel? Galatians 4:16
- What do you think about the message of the gospel?