

Our Role in Stewarding God's Eternal Plan

Ephesians 3:1-13

Ephesians 3:1-2 (NKJV)

**For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of
Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—² if
indeed you have heard of
the dispensation of the grace of
God which was given to me for you,**

Ephesians 3:3-4 (NKJV)

how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, ⁴ by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

Ephesians 3:5-6a (NKJV)

⁵ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶ that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body,

Ephesians 3:6b-7 (NKJV)

and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, ⁷ of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

Ephesians 3:8-9a (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,

Ephesians 3:9b-10 (NKJV)

**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*,**

Ephesians 3:11-12 (NKJV)

**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.**

Ephesians 3:13 (NKJV)

13 Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Ephesians 3:2b

Greek: *oikonomia*

**the dispensation of the grace of
God which was given to me
for you, (NKJV)**

**the stewardship of God's grace that was
given to me for you, (ESV)**

Ephesians 3:9a

Greek: *oikonomia*

**to make all see what is the fellowship of
this mystery, (NKJV)**

**to bring to light for everyone what is the
plan of this mystery, (ESV)**

Greek: *oikonomia*

in Eph. 1:10 and 3:9, it is used of the arrangement or administration by God, by which in “the fullness of the times” (or seasons) God will sum up all things in the heavens and on earth in Christ.

(Vine’s Expository Dictionary)

Greek: *oikonomia*

Note: A “dispensation” is not a period or epoch (a common, but erroneous, use of the word), but a **mode of dealing**, an arrangement or administration of affairs.

Cf. *oikonomos*, “a steward,” and *oikonomeo*, “to be a steward.”

(Vine’s Expository Dictionary)

Greek: *oikonomia*

oikonomia is “the management of a household or of household affairs” (*oikos*, “a house,” *nomos*, “a law”); the management or administration of the property of others, and so “a stewardship.”

(Vine’s Expository Dictionary)

OUR STEWARDSHIP

(vs. 2)

² if indeed you have heard of the dispensation
of the grace of God which was given to me
for you,

GOD'S MYSTERY

(vs. 3)

**how that by revelation He made known to me
the mystery (as I have briefly written already)**

GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

(vs. 6)

**that the Gentiles should be
fellow heirs, of the same body, and
partakers of His promise in Christ
through the gospel**

GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

(vs. 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;**

Greek: *ekklesia*

In Greek context, the *ekklesia* is primarily a political phenomenon. The Greek political usage of the word predates the biblical usage in both the Septuagint and the New Testament. The *ekklesia*, as one of the key bodies of the Athenian democracy, operated as **legislature, judiciary, and executive.**

Greek: *ekklesia*

The reason why *ekklesia* was chosen, and not synagogue, is because *ekklesia* was used to invoke the idea of a civic assembly, not an exclusively religious assembly.

Contextually, *ekklesia* was a Greek socio-politically driven word.

Greek: *ekklesia*

Even in the Septuagint the term *ekklesia* was used to denote an assembly of the whole nation, not simply a gathering of any size. It is clear from the Greek context and from Paul's interaction with the *ekklesia* that the Christian *ekklesia* regarded itself as a civic [rather than a religious] assembly.

Greek: *ekklesia*

It is clear upon examining the *ekklesia* within the Greek framework, that the purpose of the *ekklesia* is also impacted. The purpose of the *ekklesia* as the assembly of God is twofold: to act as an establishment of God's kingdom on earth, and to act in regard to the common good, compelled by love.

(Young-Ho Park quoted by Tara Caudle)

OUR ROLE IN GOD'S PLAN

(vs. 10)

to the intent that now the manifold
wisdom of God might be made
known by the church (ekklesia)
to the principalities and powers
in the heavenly *places*,

1. OUR STEWARDSHIP

2. GOD'S MYSTERY

3. GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

4. OUR ROLE IN GOD'S PLAN







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1. OUR STEWARDSHIP

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4. OUR ROLE IN GOD'S PLAN

CHALLENGE

and

INVITATION