

## Ephesians 3:1-13 Personal Parenthesis

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### Overview

Question: Where does the sentence begun in 3:1 end? We expect a verb: “For this cause I do thus and so.”

Answer: Paul is diverted by his description of himself, and resumes the sentence in 3:14, “For this cause I pray.” Thus this section is an external inclusio.

- Structurally, it is a parenthetical sidebar. Confirmed by the closed chiasmic structure of 2:11-22, which could stand by itself.
- In fact, the subject matter here flows rather naturally from the previous section, since it deals with the role of Jew and Gentile in the church.

### 1, Paul’s Description of Himself

**Why is it here?** At this point, the second point from 1:18-19 could be considered finished. 2:11-22 is a well-structured, complete discussion. We shall see that the prayer in 14-21 is a reprise of the initial prayer in 1:1-19. He has covered the first two of his three topics, and returns to his opening to recall the overall outline before picking up the thread of the third. As he began the first time by describing himself in 1:1, so here he inserts a personal reference.

**What does he call himself?** Contrast 3:1, “the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,” with 1:1, “an apostle of Jesus Christ ... to the saints ... at Ephesus.” These two titles are a history of his relation to the church in Ephesus.

- Initially, he came to them as “the apostle of Jesus Christ,” bringing the gospel as he worked his way across Asia (Acts 18:19; 19:1). A notable experience there was the strong contrast between the receptiveness of the Gentiles and the rejection by the Jews (19:8-10). This no doubt confirmed his already strong convictions about the Spirit’s way with the Gentiles.
- In expounding this truth in 2:11-22, he finds himself led by the Spirit to the vivid image of a temple constructed of Jews and Gentiles alike. At that moment, he recalls the last time he was in the physical temple, when his association with Gentiles (and an Ephesian Gentile at that, Acts 21:29) led to the accusation that he had violated the “partition” around the court of Israel, and thus to his protective arrest and subsequent voyage to Rome. His zealous advocacy of their spiritual equality is what has landed him in prison in Rome! Yet neither the Jews nor the Romans is sovereign in this arrest. It happened because he was serving Jesus Christ, and it is to Christ alone that he acknowledges himself to be in bondage.

**Why does he divert?** The title is apt, but no sooner has he written it than he realizes the potential for misunderstanding. He is not complaining, and would not have them respond to his self-description with pity. So he must explain to them how the hand of God has been working through these events.

- 3:2, “if ye have heard,” is by way of explanation of this title. “Why do I thus describe myself? Because of the particular role that the Lord has given me, as you have no doubt heard.”
- 3:13 is the conclusion toward which he is aiming. “Don’t feel sorry for me; my imprisonment is the culmination of a tremendous privilege with which I have been entrusted.” *Application:* If we have God’s perspective on our lives, we will learn to bless him even for inconveniences and misfortunes, because we recognize his sovereign control.

Along the way he gives valuable revelation concerning the nature of the church’s relation to Israel.

The body of the parenthesis is constructed around two main finite clauses: 2-7, and 8-12. The first focuses on the content of the mystery and its revelation *to* Paul, while the second focuses on his efforts in sending it out *from* himself to others. (Recall from Chapter 1 that a biblical mystery is something that people cannot know on their own but that God has revealed. Contrast with a secular mystery, which is not revealed but people must figure out on their own.)

## **2-7, The Mystery comes to Paul**

First, he describes how it is that he came to know the mystery, when it was accessible to no one else.

### **2, The Summary**

“If” here modifies the predication implicit in the last phrase, “I Paul am a prisoner of Jesus Christ on behalf of you Gentiles.” It has the rhetorical sense of “What I have just said will make sense to you if you recall, as surely you must, that ....”

The summary is that God has entrusted something to Paul to give to the Gentiles. “Dispensation” is the word “stewardship” that we encountered in 1:10. It never refers in the Bible to a period of time, but rather to a responsibility committed by one person to another. That responsibility concerns “the grace of God which is given me to you-ward.” (NB: “given” governs “grace,” not “stewardship.”)

- The object of the stewardship is “the grace of God.” Throughout Paul’s epistles, the focus of this grace is the unexpected and unmerited admission of Gentiles to the privileges of the people of God, and his privilege in bearing that message.
- That grace has been committed “to me,” but not for Paul’s own use. It is “to you-ward,” “unto you,” intended for their receipt and enjoyment.

Compare Rom 1:14, Paul’s debt to Greeks and Barbarians (not to Jews).

*Application:* We should view our knowledge of God and his Word as a stewardship, given to us in trust for others. This perspective will guide us in

- what knowledge we pursue (that which is most needful for those around us; think of our study as Christmas shopping)

- how we communicate it to others (not boastfully, to impress them with what we know, but in an effort to make them full beneficiaries of the insight we have received)

### **3-4, How he learned the mystery**

Paul never learned of God's grace toward the Gentiles in Gamaliel's school. It was "by revelation," and indeed had to be thus, since it was a "mystery." The reference to his previous writing is to 1:9,10, which briefly outlines the "mystery" as "gather[ing] together in one all things [viz., Jew and Gentile] in Christ." If they will contemplate this verse, they will realize how deeply he has penetrated into what no one ever understood before.

### **5, Why no one else knew it**

Three contrasts:

**Event:** "not made known" vs. "revealed by the Spirit." The myth of the university to the contrary notwithstanding, all knowledge is NOT ours for the searching. The most important things remain secret until they are revealed by God (Deut 29:29), and even our searching is meaningful only in terms of a kind of "hide and seek" that God plays with us for our education and amusement (Prov 25:2).

**Time:** "other ages" vs. "now." God does not deliver the entire lesson at once. There is a progression of revelation as we move through the history of God's dealings with men. Paul is here pinpointing one aspect of this progress.

**Recipients:** "the sons of men" vs. "his holy apostles and prophets."

- "Sons of men" is common in the OT but occurs only here and Mark 3:28 in the NT. (The singular is extremely common, always of the LJC.) See separate note. The expression is selected for contexts that emphasize man's finiteness and limitations as a created inhabitant of the earth, miserable and liable to rebel against God. In fact, the Hebrew clause from which the LXX translates this Greek expression is not "sons of men" but "sons of man," lit. "sons of Adam," offspring of that miserable bit of dust and clay that thought it could rebel against its maker. Here, Paul uses the expression to emphasize how incapable humanity was of figuring out such a scheme.
- The actual recipients, the "apostles and prophets" who have laid the foundation of teaching concerning the LJC in 2:20, are contrasted with the sons of men in two ways. They are "his" (God's particular possession, not the mass of humanity, thus separated *unto* him) and "holy" (separated *from* the world). This is the exalted state into which former "sons of Adam" can enter through the work of God's Spirit.

### **6, What it was about**

"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." This is the statement of the mystery. Three predicate adjectives tell us what the Gentiles become, and two prepositional phrases tell how they gain that position.

**Adjectives.**—Each of the three adjectives is a compound with the Greek preposition *συν-* "with, together." We have no English equivalent; the closest is perhaps the RV's rendering, "fellow-heirs, fellow-members, fellow-partakers." The implied object of the preposition in all three cases

is Israel. God has united Gentile and Jew in one body. The three adjectives form a climax; the first two are the basis on which the third rests.

- “fellowheir” συνκληρονομος. The inheritance that the Spirit has sealed to us (1:14) is one that we hold in common with spiritual Israel. The word is used in Heb 11:9 to describe the relation between Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; we share as closely with Israel in God’s promised blessings as did the patriarchs with one another. This adjective emphasizes our membership in the *family*, through which the inheritance is passed, cf. 2:19, “members of the household of God.” It is a remarkable claim, when we consider how important inheritance rights were to Israel. Even within Israel, one family could not take over the inheritance of another in perpetuity (e.g., the restoration of land to the original family in the year of Jubilee, Lev 25). But now we Gentiles are made fellow-heirs with Israel. Relation to “partakers of his promise”: we are named in the will. Leads us to expect a share.
- “of the same body” συσσωμος. Apparently an invention of Paul, building on one of his favorite images, the church as a body (1 Cor 12). This is an even stronger claim to the promise. Now we are not just one among many heirs, but incorporated into *the* heir.
- “partakers of his promise” συμμετοχος. This is the fruit of the first two. Because we are fellow-heirs and in fact members of the same body, we enjoy the benefits that God has promised Israel.

**Prepositional Phrases.**—These describe the two mechanisms by which we come into this exalted position. Not by converting to Judaism, but:

- “in the Christ” (MT has the article). Not the usual positional assertion “in Christ,” though it is certainly true that our being “in Christ” is what entitles us to these, but “by means of the Messiah.” Israel’s promised deliverer is ours as well.
- “through the gospel.” This is the medium through which we have learned of our need and the promised gift.

### **7, God’s provision for the task ahead**

By himself, Paul is not adequate to bear the burden of this new revelation. He cites two things that make it possible. Each reflects a reason that he could not do it on his own.

**“the gift of the grace of God”**.—Reflects a *moral* shortcoming; he does not deserve such an honor, and in fact deserves God’s wrath for his persecution of the church. Cf. v.8, “less than the least of all saints.” But by God’s gracious elective purpose he has been given this privilege.

**“the effectual working of his power”**.—Reflects a lack of *resources*, which God has made up by his supernatural power, Rom 15:18,19.

### **8-12, The Mystery flows from Paul**

Now Paul turns his attention to the transmission of the message with which he has been charged. Two infinitives describe his role in carrying the message, while a purpose clause lifts the veil on God’s intention.

### **8-9, Paul's Duty**

By way of transition, in v.7 Paul calls himself a “minister,” lit. “servant,” of the gospel. The genitive with διακονος indicates either the ones served or (as here) the system or doctrine served; cf. 2 Cor 3:6. Trace the word back its basic meaning of table-waiter; this is then the dish one serves. Paul is a waiter delivering the gospel to those for whom it is intended (cf. Rom 1:14, “I am debtor”).

Now he introduces two new pictures of his work, in two infinitives. Each is associated with a particular characterization of the message that he brings.

### **“to preach among the Gentiles”**

The gospel is good news that must be proclaimed, and Paul is the herald. The role is illustrated by the LXX's frequent use of ευαγγελιζομαι and ευαγγελιον in 2 Sam 18:19-31, the report of Absalom's death to David. Paul is like Ahimaaz and Cush, the couriers who ran from the battlefield to bring David the news. The Jews already have their courier of good news: it is the Lord Jesus himself, according to Isa 52:7, who was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And what is the message that he carries? “The unsearchable riches of Christ.” Cf. detached note, which invites a discussion of heaven's economy.

- God is often described as rich: in goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering (Rom 2:4), mercy (Eph 2:4), grace (Eph 2:7), glory (Rom 9:23; Eph 1:18; 3:16; Phil 4:19).
- Christ, though rich in heaven with God, left these riches and became poor so that we might become rich (2 Cor 8:9).
- We are to have the same attitude, and seek to distribute to others the heavenly riches that we have received: 1 Tim 6:17

Compare 2 Kings 7:1-9. Good tidings (“gospel” in LXX) demand to be shared with others. Paul has encountered good news; he must communicate it.

Note how passive we are in all of this. The riches are “unsearchable”; we could never figure them out unless they were reported to us. All we can do is herald them.

### **“to make all men see”**

The gospel is a mystery that has been revealed, and Paul is the spotlight. The clause reads literally, “to illuminate all men.”

- There is a mystery, as defined in v6.
- This mystery has been “hid in God.” He knew it all along, but has only made it known when it pleased him. Like “unsearchable” in the previous verse, emphasizes the limitations of our ability. Deut 29:29. Paul is explicitly disowning any creativity of his own in this doctrine.
- The same point is being emphasized in Paul's further definition of the mystery as a “stewardship” (AV “fellowship,” but this is not majority). He does not own it or control it; it has been given to him in trust, and he is simply the messenger.

- The Judaizers might object that Gentiles could never be on the same standing as the Jews. Thus Paul reminds them of God’s work in creation through Christ. Calvin: “By Christ, as God, the Father created (John 1:3) all things; and why, then, should we wonder, if by Christ, as Mediator, all the Gentiles are now brought back to one body?” Cf. 2 Cor 4:6.

### ***10-12, God’s Purpose in Calling Paul***

Strictly, this clause modifies “unto me is this grace given,” not the infinitives, per Hollenbach. Paul is enraptured with the grace given to him. Not only is he the means of bringing the gospel to the Gentiles, but the effect of this proclamation is the instruction of the angelic host!

The subject is “the manifold wisdom of God.” We shall want to explore the import of this phrase, as well as the three points that Paul emphasizes about it:

- its display (audience and cast), v.10
- its foundation, v.11
- its essence, v.12.

### ***The Expression***

“Manifold” means literally “many-folded,” and describes something that has many components, that brings many diverse things together. Cf. the exhaust manifold on an engine, which brings together the exhaust from the different cylinders. The Greek word means “many-colored, variegated,” describing an embroidered garment, but the figurative sense is the same. “Manifold wisdom” or “variegated wisdom” is complex, with many parts and perspectives, apparently paradoxical, unable to be summarized simply. Consider the many-foldedness of God’s wisdom:

- God is completely sovereign, yet allows sin and rebellion in his world.
- People are condemned for sin, and the saved are righteous, but salvation is by grace through faith apart from works.
- The wicked prosper, and often afflict the righteous.
- The Jews are the chosen people, yet now Gentiles are admitted to full standing along with them.

This expression recalls the story of the wise men and the elephant, each perceiving something true about the elephant, yet all disagreeing because they could not fathom the full concept.

### **The Blind Men and the Elephant, John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887).**

It was six men of Indostan  
To learning much inclined,  
Who went to see the Elephant  
(Though all of them were blind),  
That each by observation  
Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant,  
And happening to fall

Against his broad and sturdy side,  
At once began to bawl:  
“God bless me! but the Elephant  
Is very like a wall!”

The Second, feeling of the tusk,  
Cried, “Ho! what have we here  
So very round and smooth and sharp?  
To me ’tis mighty clear

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This wonder of an Elephant  
Is very like a spear!"

The Third approached the animal,  
And happening to take  
The squirming trunk within his hands,  
Thus boldly up and spake:  
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant  
Is very like a snake!"

The Fourth reached out an eager hand,  
And felt about the knee.  
"What most this wondrous beast is like  
Is mighty plain," quoth he;  
"'Tis clear enough the Elephant  
Is very like a tree!"

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,  
  
Said:"E'en the blindest man  
Can tell what this resembles most;  
Deny the fact who can  
This marvel of an Elephant  
Is very like a fan!

The Sixth no sooner had begun  
About the beast to grope,  
Than, seizing on the swinging tail  
That fell within his scope,  
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant  
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right,  
And all were in the wrong!

Moral:

So oft in theologic wars,  
The disputants, I ween,  
Rail on in utter ignorance  
Of what each other mean,  
And prate about an Elephant  
Not one of them has seen!

Or as Paul himself puts it more succinctly in 1 Cor 13:9-12, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

### *10, Its Display*

Recall the theme of Ephesians, "God on Display." His purpose in calling Paul is to glorify himself, and like a theatrical presentation, this activity requires both an audience and a cast.

**Audience.**—Angelic host, "the principalities and powers in heavenly places." The expression can refer to earthly rulers (Titus 3:1), but here as in 6:12 it is to be distinguished from "flesh and blood."

**Cast.**—The church. We are the vehicle for instructing the angels, and Paul's ministry to the Gentiles was God's way of recruiting the cast.

Other examples of this in the Bible:

- The angels are fascinated with God's plan of salvation: 1 Peter 1:12, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are

now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”

- The Lord boasts of his servants before them: Job 1:8, “And the LORD said unto Satan, ‘Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?’ ” 2:3, “And the LORD said unto Satan, ‘Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.’”
- The angels witness the behavior of believers: 1 Cor 11:10, “For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head because of the angels.”
- The redeemed lead the heavenly worship: The order of the songs in Rev 5 is first the redeemed (9), then the heavenly host, (12), then all creation (13).

Keep this in mind when you are tempted to fall short of your heavenly calling: the angels are watching, and they will judge God’s wisdom by your conduct. What you do, does matter.

### 11, *Its Foundation*

Like everything else God does with us, his use of the church as a means of instructing the angels is not an afterthought. As previously (1:4; 2:10), Paul emphasizes that nothing takes God by surprise; all is done according to his perfect plan. Note four points repeatedly emphasized in these verses (color coded in the table):

1:4	2:10	3:11
4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him	For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.	11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

1. **What** God did: an act of his will (choose, ordain, purpose)
2. **When** he did it: long ago, before any actions of ours, and therefore independent of them.
3. **How** he did it: in Christ Jesus, the mediator of all God’s actions toward us. His work toward us is intensely personal. Note the name of humiliation: “Christ Jesus,” showing the movement from the exalted title to the human name, suggesting the sacrificial mechanism by which he secured it.
4. **Why** he did it: our holy lives, to bring him glory. (This point is stronger in the first two, but echoes in the “our Lord” of 3:11.)

### 12, *Its Essence*

When Paul’s attention is drawn to the Savior, he often lingers lovingly to reflect on the blessings that we have in him.

Calvin: “There are three stages in our progress. First, we *believe* the promises of God; next, by relying on them, we obtain that *confidence*, which is accompanied by holiness and peace of



mind; and, last of all, comes *boldness*, which enables us to banish fear, and to come with firmness and steadiness into the presence of God.”

These three represent successively more involvement on our part.

**Faith.**—Our basic trust in the finished work of Christ for our redemption. We believe what God has said about

- Our sin, “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” Rom 3:10
- the judgment that we deserve because of it: “the wages of sin is death,” Rom 6:23
- the sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice for us: “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,” 2 Cor 5:21.

**Confidence.**—Confidence is the inward assurance that we enjoy as a result of our faith. We do not fear the wrath of God or our destiny after this life.

**Boldness.**—Confidence is passive; boldness is active. “Boldness and access” is a Hebrew way of saying, “bold access.” Boldness is our willingness to go directly into the presence of God for whatever we need in our daily lives.

Heb 4:14-16 is an excellent commentary on this verse.

- 14a, by faith, we have accepted “Jesus the son of God” as our high priest, the one who has offered the sufficient sacrifice for us.
- 14b, he “is passed into the heavens,” representing us there, so we can “hold fast our profession” with confidence.
- 16, therefore we can make petition for mercy and grace
  - Mercy: sympathy for our weakness and miserable condition, because our intercessor has been “tempted in all points like as we are,” and thus understands our need.
  - Grace: unmerited favor, direct help for our need. We do not deserve it, but he does, because in his temptation he was “without sin,” and he has earned it for us.

If only we could grasp this privilege, we should never be downcast or discouraged. Even when things are going badly, we have an open door to the throne-room, and can bring our concerns directly to our heavenly Father.

### **13, Conclusion: Don’t feel sorry for Paul.**

This parenthesis began with Paul’s description of himself in 3:1 as “the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.” It is a condition in which he himself glories (Col 1:24), and he would have them glory in it. “Which is” is not the ordinary relative, but the indefinite relative, which here gives a reason: “seeing that these tribulations are your glory.” (The change in number is due to grammatical attraction to the predicate of the relative clause.)

Why should they glory in it? Because it shows the importance he attaches to them, and the love he has for them. When someone makes a sacrifice for us, we are honored by the importance of the person and the degree of the sacrifice. The greatest example of this is God’s gift of his son for us. Here we learn that we are to esteem the sacrifices of our brethren as well. If the Ephesians honor Paul at all, they will appreciate the sacrifice that he is making for them.

## Notes

### **Syntax of 3:1-2 εἰ γε**

Cf. 2 Cor 5:3; Gal 3:4; Eph 3:2; 4:21; Col 1:23. Everywhere else εἰ γε furnishes a support for the previous clause. Here, the clause so supported must be, “I Paul am a prisoner of Jesus Christ on behalf of you Gentiles.”

### **“Sons of Men” in the OT (3:5)**

Hebrew בני אדם “sons of man, sons of Adam” except in Ps 4:2 איש and Dan 5:21 אנוש. In Heb the rectum is singular. Superscripts indicate whether LXX has s(ingular) or p(lural) rectum. The corresponding “son of man” for Ezekiel is בן אדם.

6x Pss, 8x Eccl, 2x Dan, 1x each Prov, Isa, Jer, Joel, Micah

The expression is selected for contexts that emphasize man’s finiteness and limitations as a created inhabitant of the earth, miserable and liable to rebel against God. Cf. parallel of singular בני אדם with איש in Num 23:19.

**Miserable.**—Eccl 2:8<sup>s</sup> (probably relates to man’s miserable condition, like others in Eccl; “these petty amusements with which these miserable creatures while away their pitiful days”); 3:10<sup>s</sup>, 18<sup>f</sup>; 9:12<sup>s</sup>; Isa 52:14<sup>p</sup> (LXX lacks υἱων); Joel 1:12<sup>p</sup>; Micah 5:7<sup>p</sup> (no control over the elements)

**Opposed to God and righteousness.**—Ps 4:2<sup>p</sup>; 57:4<sup>p</sup>; 31:19<sup>p</sup> (cf. 20 “pride of man”); 58:1<sup>p</sup> (cf. 2); Eccl 8:11<sup>s</sup>; 9:3<sup>s</sup>; cf. Mark 3:28, committer of sins and blasphemies

**Inhabitants of the earth.**—Ps 33:13<sup>p</sup> (cf. 14); Prov 8:3<sup>p</sup>; Eccl 2:3<sup>s</sup> “under heaven”

**Object of God’s revelation and review.**—Ps 145:12<sup>p</sup>; Jer 32:19<sup>p</sup>

**Other.**—Dan 5:21<sup>p</sup> (LXX lacks υἱων) (man as opposed to the beasts); 10:16<sup>p</sup> (LXX lacks υἱων) (human appearance)

### **Minister of X (3:7)**

Genitive with διακονος (cf. 3:7) can indicate:

- whose servant one is (e.g., Rom 13:4 “of God,” 16:1, Col 1:25 “of the church”)
- Jesus Christ as a minister of the circumcision (to the circumcision?) Rom 15:8. It would be easiest to understand this as “to the circumcised,” and there was a party thus designated, in two ways. 1) The expression οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς, frequently; 2) ἡ περιτομή, Gal 2:7,8,9; Eph 2:11; Phl 3:3 (always articular, with possible exception of Col 3:11, but that is epigrammatic). The trick here is the lack of the article. With S&H and Stifler, I must conclude that the emphasis is on our Lord’s completion of the covenant of circumcision; he was a minister of circumcision as Paul was of the new covenant. Compare Gal 4:4,5. But this was not all that there was to his ministry; the ff vv in Rom show that he also had a view to the Gentiles. Compare also Paul’s denial that he preached circumcision (Gal 5:11, anarthrous).
- 2 Cor 3:6 of the new covenant; this appears to be closest to the usage here. Probably objective genitive of the patient, cf. use of verb in 1 Pet 1:12; 4:10. As a waiter, what one serves (vegetables, bread, meat). Contrast objective genitive of the beneficiary.

- Gal 2:17 of sin

### ***Riches in Paul's Writings (3:8)***

2 Cor 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

Psa 31:19 [Oh] how great [is] thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; [which] thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

1 Tim 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

### ***Material wealth discouraged***

1 Tim 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and [into] many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

1 Tim 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

### ***God's wealth***

*Note emphasis on its transmission to us*

Rom 2:4 Or despisest thou the **riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering**; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Rom 9:23 And that he might make known the **riches of his glory** on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is **rich** unto all that call upon him.

Rom 11:33 O the depth of the **riches** and of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable [are] his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

2 Cor 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was **rich**, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the **riches of his grace**; 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

Eph 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the **riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints**,

Eph 2:4 But God, who is **rich in mercy**, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding **riches of his grace** in [his] kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable **riches of Christ**;

Eph 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the **riches of his glory**, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Phil 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to **his riches in glory** by Christ Jesus.

*Its communication to us*

*So, frequently, the riches that we receive from him are intended for distribution to others.*

1 Tim 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be **rich in good works**, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

2 Cor 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

Tit 3:5,6 the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly [*richly*] through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

1 Cor 1:5 That in every thing ye are **enriched** by him, **in all utterance, and [in] all knowledge**;

2 Cor 4:7 For who maketh thee to differ [from another]? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive [it], why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received [it]? 8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

2 Cor 6:10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and [yet] possessing all things.

2 Cor 9:10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for [your] food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) 11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

Rom 11:12 Now if the fall of them [be] the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

2 Cor 8:2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto **the riches of their liberality**.

Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what [is] the **riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles**; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Col 2:2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all **riches of the full assurance of understanding**, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;