

January 27, 2019

**“Strength When Hard Things Hit”**  
Ephesians 3:1-13

**Ice Breaker:**

Give an example of everyday things you benefit from even though you do not fully understand them.

Share a time you were surprised by a gift or party. How did you feel when you received it?

**Study Questions:** (READ Ephesians 2:4-7)

1. What insight, principle or observation did you find to be most fresh, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.
2. What is the mystery that's been made known? (verses 3-6)
3. Why might the Jews feel threatened by Paul's message that God had included all peoples in His plan and God wanted them to join together?
4. What is Paul's attitude toward his ministry? (verses 1-2, 7-8) What can we learn about that for our own serving of God?
5. Why did Paul say he was the least important of God's people? (verse 8) (See also I Cor. 15:9, II Tim. 1:15)
6. Why does God think it's important for the verse 10 "rulers and authorities in heavenly places" (angels/demons) to see God's wisdom played out through the church? What do they learn from the church?
7. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate our church when it comes to unity . . . to accepting people of all race and nations . . . cultural differences . . . prejudice . . . spiritual elitism . . . to the poor and elderly . . . to missions . . . justice?

**Pray for each other:**

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Difficult circumstances barge in uninvited. Things happen you just don't understand. It rocks your life and shakes your faith. You don't want to lose heart, but fears and doubts sneak in. You need strength. You need a new perspective when hard things hit.

1. View hard things differently.
2. Assess what you value most.
3. Fully engage in God's brilliant plan.

**Next Step:**

Are you in a 'prison' of hardship right now? Doubt . . . fear . . . discouragement . . . suffering . . . conflict . . . attacks? There is something about putting your thoughts down in written words. God slowed Paul down long enough to write. Spend ten minutes a day journaling this week. Watch how God goes deep with you and begins to change your heart.