

Kingdom Clarity

Ephesians 3:1-13

“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” *Ephesians 3:20-21*

“So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is for your glory.”
Ephesians 3:13

How does the church keep from losing heart? By having Kingdom Clarity.
Seeing things from a biblical perspective.

I. Clarity About His Imprisonment. *Ephesians 3:2-6*

“For this reason, I Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles...” *Ephesians 3:1*

Paul’s imprisonment had a strategic purpose.

“For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in the flesh, the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing in the law of commandments expressed in the ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two so making peace...” *Ephesians 2:14-15*

Paul’s imprisonment had sovereign power.

“For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus...”
Ephesians 3:1

“This is the calling of the Christian life. We are to be willing to embrace brokenness and weakness for the sake of the kingdom of God. We are to embrace lowliness. The question that we are really being asked is not how can we become impressive as a church but rather are we willing to become nothing for the sake of Christ.” *Brian Chapell*

“Therefore, since we have this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart... But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.” *2 Corinthians 4:1,7-10*

We ought to be praying that God would put us in effective places for the gospel rather than easy places and we ought not to lose heart when he does.

II. Clarity About His Calling. *Ephesians 3:2-6*

“... assuming you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you,” *Ephesians 3:2*

Paul’s responsibility was not to change history. God was already doing that.
Paul’s responsibility was to proclaim the grace of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Oikonomia = Stewardship

“Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he would suffer for my name.” *Acts 9:15*

“...I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the Word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations now revealed to the saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of His mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that He powerfully works in me.” *Colossians 1:24-29*

Our calling isn’t to make history. God is doing that.
Our calling is to proclaim Christ faithfully.

Let’s pray that we might do that.

III. Clarity About His Competency. *Ephesians 3:7-9*

“Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given to me by the working of His power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ...” *Ephesians 3:7-9*

“Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain.” *1 Corinthians 15:8-10*

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“I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.” *1 Timothy 1:12-14*

Our weakness is exactly what qualifies us to be instruments for the advancement of the gospel because our weaknesses magnify God’s wisdom and God’s power.

So, let’s offer ourselves as we are in service to the Lord.

IV. Clarity About His Christ’s Commitment.

Ephesians 3:11-12

“This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him. So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is for your glory.” *Ephesians 3:11-13*

“And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily.” *Luke 18:7-8*

“Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send workers into the harvest field.” *Matthew 9:38*

Paul isn’t cut off by being put in prison.

He has direct access and bold confidence to the very throne of heaven.

So, do we.

So, don’t lose heart!