

## The Behind-The-Scenes Story

**Ephesians 1:3** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

... <sup>4</sup> **He chose us** in Him before the foundation of the world...

... <sup>5</sup> **He predestined us to adoption** as sons ...

... <sup>7</sup> In Him **we have redemption** ...

... <sup>9</sup> **He made known to us the mystery of His will** ...

... <sup>11</sup> **we have obtained an inheritance**...

... <sup>13</sup> **you were sealed** in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

...**1:18** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling,

what are **the riches of the glory of His inheritance** in the saints,

<sup>19</sup> and what is **the surpassing greatness of His power** toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

<sup>20</sup> which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*,...

...**2:3** ...*(we)* were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, **made us alive** together with Christ (**by grace you have been saved**),

...**3:1** For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--

<sup>2</sup> if indeed you have heard of **the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me** for you;

<sup>3</sup> that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

<sup>4</sup> And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,

<sup>5</sup> which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

<sup>6</sup> *to be specific*, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through **the gospel**,

<sup>7</sup> **of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace** which was given to me according to the working of His power.

<sup>8</sup> To me, the very least of all saints, this **grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ**,

### For the Name of the Lord Jesus:

#### 1. Live ready to die

**Acts 20:22** ...behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, <sup>23</sup> except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

<sup>24</sup> "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

**Acts 21:12** ...we as well as the local residents *began* begging him not to go up to Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup> Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

#### 2. Witness with wisdom

**Acts 21:17** And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

<sup>18</sup> And now the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

<sup>19</sup> And after he had greeted them, he *began* to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

<sup>20</sup> And when they heard it they *began* glorifying God; and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law;

<sup>21</sup> and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.

<sup>22</sup> "What, then, is *to be done*? They will certainly hear that you have come.

<sup>23</sup> "Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow;

<sup>24</sup> take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses in order that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.

<sup>25</sup> "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication."

<sup>26</sup> Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself along with them, went into the temple, giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the sacrifice was offered for each one of them.

### **3. Look for opportunities to share**

<sup>27</sup> And when the seven days were almost over, the Jews from Asia, upon seeing him in the temple, *began* to stir up all the multitude and laid hands on him,

<sup>28</sup> crying out, "Men of Israel, come to our aid! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people, and the Law, and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."

<sup>29</sup> For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

<sup>30</sup> And all the city was aroused, and the people rushed together; and taking hold of Paul, they dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut.

<sup>31</sup> And while they were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the commander of the *Roman* cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

<sup>32</sup> And at once he took along *some* soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them; and when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

<sup>33</sup> Then the commander came up and took hold of him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains; and he *began* asking who he was and what he had done.

<sup>34</sup> But among the crowd some were shouting one thing *and* some another, and when he could not find out the facts on account of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks.

<sup>35</sup> And when he got to the stairs, it so happened that he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob;

<sup>36</sup> for the multitude of the people kept following behind, crying out, "Away with him!"

### **4. Use words to share your story**

<sup>37</sup> And as Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the commander, "May I say something to you?" And he said, "Do you know Greek?"

<sup>38</sup> "Then you are not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?"

<sup>39</sup> But Paul said, "I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city; and I beg you, allow me to speak to the people."

<sup>40</sup> And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned to the people with his hand; and when there was a great hush, he spoke to them in the Hebrew dialect, saying,

Your story part 1. relate to the a \_\_\_\_\_

**22:1** "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense which I now *offer* to you."

<sup>2</sup> And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew dialect, they became even more quiet; and he said,

<sup>3</sup> "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, just as you all are today.

<sup>4</sup> "And I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons,

<sup>5</sup> as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.

## Your story part 2. Share J \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>6</sup> "And it came about that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me,

<sup>7</sup> and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?'

<sup>8</sup> "And I answered, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'

<sup>9</sup> "And those who were with me beheld the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.

<sup>10</sup> "And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go on into Damascus; and there you will be told of all that has been appointed for you to do.'

<sup>11</sup> "But since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and came into Damascus.

<sup>12</sup> "And a certain Ananias, a man who was devout by the standard of the Law, *and* well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there,

<sup>13</sup> came to me, and standing near said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very time I looked up at him.

<sup>14</sup> "And he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear an utterance from His mouth.

<sup>15</sup> 'For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard.

<sup>16</sup> 'And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'

## Your story part 3. Share some of your j \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>17</sup> "And it came about when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance,

<sup>18</sup> and I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.'

<sup>19</sup> "And I said, 'Lord, they themselves understand that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in Thee.

<sup>20</sup> 'And when the blood of Thy witness Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving, and watching out for the cloaks of those who were slaying him.'

<sup>21</sup> "And He said to me, 'Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'"

<sup>22</sup> And they listened to him up to this statement, and *then* they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live!"