

## **Ephesians 3:1-13**

What do they need to know? The Gospel levels the field so that everyone is the same in Christ  
Why do they need to know it? So we won't compare ourselves to others  
What do they need to do? Come boldly and confidently to God  
Why do they need to do it? To find our identity in Him, instead of others.  
How can I help them remember? Build relationships that matter

### **Me**

Do you ever get defensive when someone starts talking about how someone else is doing something good? Or when you are really smart in a certain area and someone comes up to you saying...I just love what this person did, I think you should do it that way. Does that get you upset? I found myself doing that lately. Whenever someone would talk about something I would try and one up them. Yesterday I'm putting Collin and Griffin to bed when Griffin shows me his pillow case he made from VBS. I tell Griff great job bro to which Collin chimes in with well my pillowcase is drying and it has more stamps than Griff. So I told Collin that we are going to have a competition to see who can get the most stamps on a pillowcase. It'll be a cage match. We can sell tickets and make money for missions. Just kidding. I told him that we shouldn't compare what we do to others...even though I feel like that's what I've been doing lately.

### **We**

We just love to be better than someone else don't we? It makes us feel better to one up someone or know that we might be extremely messed up but we aren't as bad as that person. Sometimes we do this at other's expense. Or maybe you've been on the other side of that and it took all of your strength to not lash out at that person. Don't you just hate it when you feel like that? I mean constantly comparing what you do with what others do? We do this all day. We all have this desire to feel like we are special, like we are above others, to want to make a difference or even just have some significance. But, like last week, this creates a wall among us. We mess up the community God truly wanted with these walls and as a result we lose our sense of identity. Paul talks about how he is one of the least deserving people when it comes to being a part of the body of Christ because of his past. But then he gives a solution to how we can deal with our identity in Christ.

### **God**

#### **You: So What?**

The point of this is that we have nothing to boast in. Being saved by grace is what the Gospel is, the good news, not by works so that no one can boast. The Gospel levels the playing field. It creates a new way of viewing ourselves. Not because we have an iphone, the latest gadget, or cool clothes, or because we work out a ton, or good at racquetball. We truly have nothing to boast in because nothing we do can save us from our sins! We need to stop comparing ourselves to others because just like last week that creates division among the body of Christ.

#### **Now What?**

In order to have a Grace-driven community we have to live Gospel centered life. We have to understand that the Gospel is the same, it never changes because God never changes. We can't get more grace than someone else, it is not a competition to earn more grace. More of God's favor. That's not possible. So we should come boldly as it says in v. 12 into God's presence and realize that we are all made in His image under His authority so that we are all under His power.

When we realize that the Gospel levels the field for anyone and everyone, we look at everyone and anyone as better than ourselves. Philippians 2:3-4

When we do this we build relationships that matter. They matter because the focus is no longer on us trying to impress someone, or trying to out do someone or even just trying to be a good Christian. When we just have plain old relationships, we focus on ourselves. But if we come boldly into God's presence through prayer on our knees for someone to know Christ or for us to love someone regardless of their "status" we build relationships that matter. Then, we are unified and the playing field is level. There is no super Christian, no perfect person, no better person. Just people who are driven by the Gospel through grace which we have been saved that we did nothing for.

### **We**

This way, the Gospel forms you into a follower of Christ which then begins a Gospel centered community that is loving and accepting. Only then can we build relationships that matter. Only then can we truly reach this campus with the Good News of Christ. Only then can we realize what Christ did on the cross for us.