

## God's Splash Ball

### I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Baby Ded 2nd: Maximillian Sanchez. Parents: Ramon & Lorena. (Sebastian 4yrs)
- B. Slide3-6 Kelly: Child@Rsk. Women's Min Mtg. REAL Tues. R&R.
- C. Slide7-12 Better Together. Israel Mtg. Divorce Care. Loung Wi. Pray 4 Schl. 3 Guests.
- D. Prayer: Loung Wi. CM. Lord, *the world is the world. May the church be the church.*

### II. Slide13 Intro: God's Splash Ball

- A. Remember there are 2 prayers in Ephesians (here and in 1:15-23) complement each other.
  1. The 1st, a prayer for enlightenment; the 2nd is for enablement.
  2. Paul wants the Ephesians to learn all they have in Christ and then live what they have learned.
- B. Last week: Paul unveiled *the mystery of old*...the new society, the combo of Jew & Gentile into one, a.k.a. the Church.
  1. The believing Jews & Gentiles are one & share *the same spiritual riches*.
  2. Jesus said, *I will build My church* (Mt.16:18). Paul reminds us, *and God uses people to help get the job done*.
    - a) This week: Paul will explain *his unique role in building up the church*. Thus, the building of the church should be our *motivation* to *pray & serve* also.

### III. Slide14 IT'S A MYSTERY (1-13)

- A. MYSTERY REVEALED (1-7)
- B. (1) Ever get interrupted in your prayers...Paul does here (see vs.1&14)
  1. He deviates on the subject of *the divine mystery*.
- C. Mystery - the ordinary English sense of this word implies *knowledge withheld*. The biblical sense is *truth revealed*. [mystery = formerly kept secret but now revealed]
  1. The mystery was made known only by divine revelation, to those illuminated by the Spirit.

- D. (6) **Mystery summed up**. No one could have foreseen the inclusion of the Gentiles, **but** here it is plainly revealed via Paul.
- E. The **content** of the mystery is Christ: **Christ for us** in *giving His life* on our behalf. **Christ in us** *accomplishing His purpose* by working in each member of His body.
- F. **Slide15a MYSTERY'S PURPOSE (8-13)**
- G. (8) **Unsearchable riches** – they far surpass our human ability to *understand*.
1. Paul used same word in Rom.11:33 *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How **unsearchable** are His judgments and His ways past finding out.*
  2. God's riches are so vast **no one** can plumb their depths.
- H. (9) **From the beginning of the ages** – Paul traced this mystery all the way back to creation
1. Paul's purpose: To **preach** (8) & **make plain/make all see** (9).
- I. (10) **Manifold wisdom** – compound word (*many + many sided*).
1. **Slide15b Or**, very many-*sided*, **or** very many-*faceted*, **or** very many-*colored*.
  2. (William Barclay) *The idea in this word is that **the grace of God will match any situation** which life may bring us. There is nothing of **light** or of **dark**, of **sunshine** or of **shadow**, for which it is not *triumphantly adequate*.*
- J. (12) God's plan was more than a **successful operation**. It became a *personal experience*.  
[in Christ we have a *free* approach to God - **access**]
1. **Slide15c Trifecta: Boldness, access, & confidence** to come to God in faith.
  2. C.H. Spurgeon once said, **Prayer pulls the rope down below and the great bell rings above in the ears of God. *Some* scarcely stir the bell, for they pray so languidly; *others* give only an occasional jerk at the rope. **But he who communicates with heaven is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously with all his might.****

#### IV. **Slide16a POWER PRAYER (14-21)**

- A. (14) **Paul moves towards a powerful prayer**. I think he's placing this prayer in the greater **Roman** context. He does it by subtly kind of rewriting what the Romans called...*genius*.

- B. **Genius** - How we define it today: an action so unbelievably creative, brilliantly, impressive. Or a person, he/she is *genius*.
1. **Slide16b Defined:** In Roman religion, the genius is the individual instance of a *general divine nature* that is present *in every individual person, place, or thing*. [picture a guardian angel, your protection spirit]
    - a) The **genius** would follow each man from the hour of his birth **until** the day he died.
  2. Each individual **place** had a genius and so did powerful **objects**, such as volcanoes. **It was thus extremely important in the Roman mind to propitiate the appropriate genii for the major undertakings and events of their lives.**
  3. The Christian theologian **Augustine** equated the Christian **soul** with the Roman genius, **citing the ancient Roman Scholar Varro** as attributing the rational powers and abilities of every human being **to their genius**.
  4. **So, in every person, house, wherever you went, there was some kind of genius in it.**
  5. In the Roman Cults, the only genius that mattered, was the one that belonged to **the father** of the household.
    - a) Genius manifested itself as *the general life principle* that governed the way families lived **and** how that *life principle* was passed on for generations. [where we get genes]
  6. The only genius that mattered was **the father**.
  7. The king of all geniuses belonged to [Slide17a **no not Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius**] **but to the Emperor**. The title for the father was *pater familias* (father of the family)
    - a) **Slide17b eg.** this is the **Bronze genius** depicted as *pater familias* (1st century CE).
    - b) **Slide17c** This is the **Genius of Domitian**. [Thus began the tradition of the Imperial cult, in which Romans worshipped *the genius* of the emperor *rather than* the person]
    - c) Thus the **Emperor** was *pater familias* **over all the Roman family**. His genius was the most revered.
- C. **Slide18,19 Now I'll read** vs.14,15. [note: *the Father...whole family...is named.*]
1. Paul communicates...*there is a higher, new (to them), bigger than Caesar*, One who is **The Pater Familias** in whom everyone derives their name.

- a) Every **identity** given...comes from **The Father** (*heavenly*). **And in Him** is in whose name I am praying.
- b) **Dads** give people their identity & meaning. **And that's** who I am kneeling before... **the Father**.

D. **Slide20a PRAYER FOR 5 THINGS** (14-19)

E. **Finally** back to the prayer – let me start over...*For this reason...*

1. This prayer is for **spiritual vision**, to **see & lay hold of the greatness of God's love & power**.

F. Now he lists **5 resources** which His people may draw upon in prayer.

1. **Slide20b 1st we need Inner Strength/Power/might** (16) which comes via **His Spirit in the inner man**. [*inner man* = the **center** of a person's life]

- a) This is where we get our **real strength**. It comes **from God**, who is *present & active* in the believer's life. His power works **in & through** us.
- b) A story is told of a woman who lived in a remote valley. She went to a great deal of trouble to have **electrical power** installed in her home. They noticed she didn't use very much electricity at all. In fact, her usage was minuscule. They sent a meter reader out to check on the matter. The man came to the door and said, "We've looked at the amount. Don't you use electricity?" "Oh yes" she said. "We **turn it on every night** to see *how to light our lamps* and then we **switch it off again**."

(1) This sounds like the way many Christians apply the power of God in their lives. [turn it on, switch it off again]

2. **Slide20c Next we need Faith** (17a) *that Christ may dwell in your hearts thru faith*.

- a) *may dwell* - the Greek word used here, carries the sense of *residing permanently*.

3. **Slide20d Next we need Love** (17b) **rooted & grounded in love**.

- a) **Rooted and grounded** - Paul uses these 2 metaphors: 1 *agricultural* (**rooted**) **the other architectural** (**grounded**/a foundation) **reminder of the stability** that Christ provides

(1) *Too many Christians want the fruits of the Spirit without being rooted in spiritual things*. wiersbe **A new orientation toward others**.

- (a) **Love** is the *foundation* of the believer's life.

4. Slide20e Next we need **comprehension/spiritual understanding** (18,19a) *of Christ's love*.

a) Comprehend **the dimensions** of Christ's love [wide/long/high/deep]

b) **Passes knowledge** – compound word, *beyond & to throw*.

(1) *To throw over & beyond*. Not hitting the baseball over the fence, **but** knocking it deep into the stands.

5. Slide20f Next we need **the Fullness of God** (19b) of God. *Here is God's ultimate purpose for the lives of His people*. [Oh to experience the fullness of God]

a) This could refer to the *blessings* of God, **or** to His *perfection and completeness*.

G. Slide21 PAUL'S DOXOLOGY OF PRAISE (20,21) *a stirring benediction*

H. (20) **Exceedingly abundantly** – compound word made up of **3 words** to show *the highest form of comparison imaginable*.

1. **Paul connected:** *above, out of, exceedingly...* to form this word.

2. It means *exceedingly abundantly, superabundantly*, quite beyond all measure. It goes beyond *the expression of language*. Shepherd's Notes, Ephesians, pg.41

3. **God's power at work within us** is able to **carry out His work more abundantly, than we can even imagine**.

a) Slide22-24 Behind right field of San Francisco's **AT&T Park** is *McCovey Cove*, where fans sit in their boats & kayaks, waiting for *a splash ball*.

b) **So**, this phrase *exceedingly abundantly* isn't hitting the baseball over the fence, **nor** deep into the stands, **but** knocking it out of the park...*this here is God's splash ball!*

I. Slide25a God gives us more than we **ask**:

1. **Abraham** – said, *I can't expect Sarah to bear a child in her old age. God promised a seed. It must be in this child of Hagar. Oh that Ishmael might live before You*.

a) God granted him that, **but** He gave him **Isaac** as well, **&** **all the blessings of the covenant**.

2. **David** – in Ps.21:4 David asked **life** from God. And God gave him *more than* length of days for himself, **but a throne** for his sons throughout all generations.
3. **Man w/palsy** friends brought him to Jesus & asked for a **physical** healing. Jesus said, 1st healed him **spiritually**, *son...your sins are forgiven*. Then healed him **physically**.
  - a) God gives greater things than we ask for.
4. **Dying thief** – asked, *Lord, remember me*. Jesus' reply, *today you will be with me in paradise*.
5. **The Prodigal** – *I'm not worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants*. His father answered: *Bring forth the best robe & put it on him; put a ring on his hand, & sandals on his feet*.
  - a) Once you get into the position of an *asker*, you shall have what you never asked for & never thought to receive. Spurgeon

J. **Slide25b** He says to **ask**

*all that we ask*

*above all that we ask or think*

*abundantly above all that we ask or think*

*exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think*

*able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we **ask** or think.*