



**SERIES: Ephesians**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Thursday, January 21, 2021**

**Scripture: Ephesians 3:1-5**

**TITLE: The Adventure of Following Jesus**

Do you remember the 1968 movie, *Planet of the Apes*? What a great movie! That movie kept you wondering the whole time, “What on earth is going on here? Where did Charlton Heston and his crew land? How did these apes become supreme?” It was a mystery from beginning to end. If you’ve seen that movie, then you’ll never forget the ending, when the truth was finally revealed. The big surprise was that it was Earth all along. The apes evolved, and now ruled the Earth.

Now, you won’t find that kind of scenario in the Bible. You won’t find evolution in the Bible either. But what you will find is mystery, and mystery solved. What do I mean by that? Listen to what Paul declares beginning in Ephesians 3:1.

“When I think of all this, I, Paul, a **prisoner** of Christ Jesus for the benefit of you Gentiles ... <sup>2</sup> assuming, by the way, that you know God gave me the special responsibility of extending his grace to you Gentiles. <sup>3</sup> As I briefly wrote earlier, God himself revealed his mysterious plan to me. <sup>4</sup> As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ. <sup>5</sup> God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now by his Spirit, he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets.” (Eph. 3:1-5, NLT)

What is Paul talking about here? He says, “God himself revealed some mysterious plan to me.” The mysterious plan was that Christ came to save both Jew and Gentile. God’s offer and plan of Salvation weren’t just for His Chosen People: the Jews. No, the free gift of Salvation is for everyone.

Now, there’s something Paul says here that is what I really want to talk about. He says, “I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus.” Woah. That doesn’t sound like a lot of fun. It certainly doesn’t sound like a free gift of Salvation. Well, friend, Salvation truly is a free gift. Paul is so clear about this. But I’ll be honest with you: Salvation is a gift, but it is the most expensive gift you’ll ever receive.

Paul’s word for “a prisoner” is a Greek word that means “to be chained to” or “bound to” Christ. He is to follow Christ wherever He leads. You see, Jesus is good, but He isn’t safe. Christ radically transforms you and your life when you die to sin. Christ takes you on a journey, unlike any other.

You can go willingly, like a child going to Disneyland, or like a cat being dragged to the vet. Either way, Jesus is moving. You’re bound to Him. The question is, are you following Him, or are you putting your heels into the dirt?

My challenge for you today is to stop resisting the Lordship of Christ. Christ loves you. He saved you. Now He wants to transform you. But what's so cool is, He wants to use you. But for that to happen, you need to start following Him.

Identify where it is Jesus is asking you to go. Then take one step today to following Him. The adventure awaits. Let's get going.