**June 25, 2017 “For This Reason” Ephesians 3:1-4**

As most of you know, we as a men’s council have been meeting several times over the last few months, primarily to discuss the foundational building blocks of the Osseo Community Church for today, tomorrow and Lord willing for the years to come after we have passed from this scene. We have laid out two goals for this church which will aid us in our pursuit to glorify Christ in this place.

The first goal is to lay a foundation of sequential and systematic Bible study for all ages and interests. First, we have a structure in place for Children’s Church where every six weeks the children will complete a course of study based on one particular theme. Second, we are in the process of developing 4 classes for Sunday school.

The first class will be for the younger children

The second will be for those form age 8-16 where we will study many of the stories of the Old and New Testament

The third will be what we have called “Christianity 101”. This class is for those who want to learn things like: why do we practice believer’s baptism? Why do we celebrate the Lord’s Supper? Why do we believe in laying on of hands in prayer? Why do we anoint the sick with oil?

The fourth class will be focused more on a particular book like Colossians where those in that class will study the supremacy of Christ in all matters.

The second goal for the Osseo Community Church is to increase our efforts in evangelism. What good will it be for us to learn and learn and learn about Jesus if we do not tell others and help them to grow as we also are growing Christ?

All of the things I have mentioned to you have one primary purpose and that is to draw us into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. There is a primary truth which must be acknowledged and reiterated again and again. That truth is this; **we have to know what and why we believe what we do before we can live it.**

That leads to our study for today. Paul, in his letter to the church as Ephesus, has divided this book into two parts. In the first three chapters, Paul describes the wonderful plan of God of His body call “the Church”. In the last three chapters, Paul lays out how we as the “body of Christ” should now live.

But in order for us to live for the Glory of God, Paul wants us to know why we should discipline our lives for the Glory of God. This truth is explained succinctly for us in Romans 12:1-2… be transformed through the renewing of your mind.

That is why the alcoholic can be set free. The drug addict and the convict. The homemaker and the house builder. They can all be set free by the power of the Word of God as it works to renew their minds for the Glory of God.

1. Ephesians 3:1
   1. For this reason?????
      1. What reason?
         1. Ephesians 2:16… you are one body
         2. Ephesians 2:17… you who were far off are now near
         3. Ephesians 2:18… we all have one access to God the Father… through the working of the Holy Spirit
         4. Ephesians 2:19… citizens with the saints… household of God
         5. Ephesians 2:20… built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets
         6. Ephesians 2:21… made into a holy temple for God
         7. Ephesians 2:22… built into a dwelling of God
   2. The prisoner of Christ Jesus
      1. For the sake of the Gentiles
         1. What????
         2. Why would Paul have to be a prisoner for us?
         3. Do you know that by the time Paul writes this letter he has been in prison for about 5 years?
2. Ephesians 3:3, 4
   1. The mystery of Christ
      1. What mystery?
         1. What does that mean?
         2. Is it some hidden truth we have to discover?
      2. Galatians 3:26-29
      3. This message is what got Paul imprisoned
   2. Follow his life
      1. Saul the Pharisee
         1. Stoning of Stephen
         2. Throwing people into jail
         3. Probably killing some
      2. Road to Damascus
         1. Preaches… a new age has come
         2. Age of grace
         3. You don’t have to obey all the ceremonies anymore
         4. The Gentiles can be saved through faith in Christ
            1. Gentiles react… Romans 15:25-27
            2. Acts 21:17-26

Paul trying to achieve a semblance of unity in Jerusalem

* + - * 1. Acts 21:27-31

Riot broke out

This is the man who preaches (Acts 21:28)

Gentile can be saved through faith in Christ alone

Jew can be saved through faith in Christ alone

* + 1. For five years I have been in prison for preaching this
       1. I am not a prisoner of Rome
       2. I am a prisoner of Christ Jesus
          1. For your sake

Just as Christ gave His life as a ransom for many

Paul was prepared to do the same

If this was the cost of sharing the good news of Christ… so be it

Can I say the same?

Can you?