

# Sharers together

## Ephesians 3:2-13

I don't want to achieve immortality through my work, I want to achieve it through not dying.

Woody Allen

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

(NIV Eccles 3:11)

## A universal and historical perspective

Nation = *ethnos*, culture, values , community.

Three remarkable claims

1. That the gospel for the nations is a *new* revelation (v5).
2. That Paul himself is the administrator of it (v8).
3. That this gives the gospel not just a local, or even global, but a universal perspective! (vv10,11)

## The gospel for the nations is a *new* revelation (v5)

“This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and the *desired of all nations* will come, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the LORD Almighty. ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the LORD Almighty.” (NIV Hag 2:6–9)

A new temple, a new city, a new peace.

The gospel for the nations is a *new revelation* (v5)

The nations, *as nations*, are God's inheritance.

Jesus is king of kings, emperor of a multicultural empire.

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (NIV 2 Cor 10:5)

The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into [the city]. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (NIV Rev 21:26–27)

Paul himself is the administrator of the new revelation (v8).

A Pharisee who had studied in Jerusalem with the best Hebrew teachers.

Born in Tarsus, fluent in Greek, a hellenist with a knowledge of Greek philosophy and poetry (which he quotes), a Roman citizen.

In Athens (Acts 17), Paul respects Greek culture, but aims to have it illuminated by Christ.

This gives the gospel a universal perspective!  
(vv10,11)

The heavenly perspective gives earthly things their meaning, whereas death and an earthly vision destroys meaning.

Two implications

1. Christian unity includes and transcends cultural diversity
2. Heaven is not boring  
(You don't need to take a magazine)