

1Tim 23-11-12b

We're in 1st Timothy chapter 2, and we have seen the importance of understanding God's ultimate ideal will, that all men come to salvation and a knowledge of the truth. Sadly, because of the nature of free will, there will be a portion that comes to faith and receives God's gracious gift of salvation and eternal life, but it is not the will of God that any should perish. Jesus Christ was the propitiation for everyone, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world, out of 1st John.

So, there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. And the idea that there is one God is interesting in the sense that when you go to Ephesians and you talk about the unity of God, or one God, remember there is one God, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, there is one spirit, and you have the Trinity in that passage. There is one spirit, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father.

And so you have one God, as is expressed in Old Testament Israel's Shema, the Lord our God is one, and yet you have one spirit, one Lord, one God and Father of us all. And you have the three members of the Trinity there in Paul's description in Ephesians chapter 4. He says, I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, this is the beginning of Ephesians 4, 4-1, with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, unity of the Spirit, capital S. There is one body and one spirit, capital S, this is verse 4, just as you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all and through all and in you all. This is another great example of Paul's use of the word all to describe the universality which is potential.

The indwelling of the Father isn't actually present in all believers. The Lord Jesus talks about the condition upon which He and His Father would come and make their home with a believer. But the potential, the opportunity, the invitation is there for all.

And day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, we make the decisions that either claim and enter into these divine provisions and promises and opportunities or we pass them by. We leave them unclaimed. We leave them unused with eternal consequences.

The decisions that we make and the faith that we exercise, the promises we claim, the efforts we make to put on the full armor of God reflect. I used to give the example back when people were familiar with turntables of what a small movement an oval diamond needle makes as it tracks the groove in a record album. And yet through the cartridge and into the preamplifier and into the amplifier, it can become incredibly loud sound.

And it is moving speaker cones through a great amount of distance, moving a great amount of air and having a tremendous amount of effect from something that is inaudible at its beginning. It's a tiny movement and our faith in small things, trusting God

for the details, trusting God for the fruit of the Spirit, looking to Him for the strength and the power to manifest that fruit. It can be inaudible at present.

You say, well, I don't know that anybody even noticed that I was patient or that I was kind or that I bore with something that was unjust or unfair. I let it go. I overlooked it.

I kept my peace. I looked to God. I committed that to Him and I didn't snap and I didn't try to wound with my tongue that is set on fire with the flames of hell.

I won a little victory there, but it's probably passing unnoticed. It may not have had much of an effect. But these expressions of faith in our momentary light afflictions, which sometimes don't seem very momentary and very light, are working that eternal weight of glory.

So these alls that you see here, one God and Father of all who is above all and through all and in you all. If you look at your text note there, it says in all and the you is omitted in the best text because God the Father is not in all of us, even as believers. That is a privilege reserved for those who meet the conditions.

It is a conditional promise of the indwelling of the Father. We have the indwelling of the Spirit, ubiquitous, but Christ at home in your hearts, Christ in you, the hope of glory, I and my Father will come to Him and make our home with Him. That is not concomitant with salvation.

That is concomitant with faith and obedience over time. And so the word you there, you might want to at least put a note beside, if not scratch through. The text note in your New King James there is valid.

But the word all, Father of all, above all, through all and in all. That is all true. But what I'm interested in here as we are back in our passage is the claim that Paul makes about the Lord Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

This is a really difficult phrase in Greek and I'm not going to agonize through it except to say that this really says, this is the word for time and then *idios*, which means its own, to be testified in its own time. What is it that's testified in its own time? Pay attention now because this may be unbroken snow for some of us. To be testified in its time.

If it's been testified in its own time, that means that it was previously not testified. What did you know of that is now revealed but wasn't always testified to? Remember that *mysterion* that Paul talks about in other passages? So what is the content of the mystery? And what is Paul's role in revealing it? That's what comes up in this passage. To be testified in its own time.

That could have been left out and we wouldn't miss it, would we? That Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all, for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle. But to be

testified in due time, this testimony is what Paul has been appointed an apostle and a preacher to reveal and to proclaim. Now think about this.

How much of this had been revealed in the Old Testament? How much of it was revealed in the preaching and teaching of the Lord Jesus and indeed of the 12 that He sent forth and the 70 that He sent forth during His lifetime? Was the message that the Lord Jesus preached, Sermon on the Mount, Sermon in the Plain, teaching from the boat, the parables, the excursus that He would give from time to time on various subjects, the woes to the Pharisees, the red ink in the Gospels, how much of that qualifies under this mediatorship and giving Himself a substitutionary ransom for all? Very little, very little. And this is an interesting subject. I want to read you something as I began to investigate this.

There is a lack of appreciation of how significant this actually is. You have probably heard, and this is a little bit of an introduction, have you ever heard somebody say, well, Jesus preached a Gospel and made a presentation and to understand Christianity, we should look to the teaching of Jesus. And there are those who say the Apostle Paul came in later and screwed it up, taught a different Gospel.

And by the way, this is what Muslims believe. This is what Islam formally teaches. They say Jesus was a great prophet and anytime they talk about the prophet Jesus, they have a little abbreviation after His name, peace be unto Him.

So if you ever see this abbreviation in an Islamic writing, they'll say the prophet Jesus and then it'll say P-B-U-H. And it's the prophet Jesus, peace be unto Him. When they talk about the prophet Muhammad, peace be unto him, they will never mention his name without pronouncing a blessing.

Well, Muslims bless the name of Jesus. The prophet Jesus, but as a prophet, not as the son of Allah, not as the ransom and the savior of the world. He was a prophet.

He prophesied, he bore witness to Allah in some form or fashion, that's the Muslim view. The thing I want to get to here is Paul as the steward, as the preacher, as the Apostle of the mystery. That is what he is alluding to in our passage when he goes on to say, for which I was appointed in verse 7, a preacher and an apostle.

Paul was specifically appointed to be a preacher and apostle of this testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ as atonement and mediator. This to me, as an aside, has implications for who wrote Hebrews, because what is Hebrews about? Christ as the mediator of a new and better covenant, speaks better things than the blood of Abel. The blood of goats and bulls can never take away sin.

The priest went year by year and had to keep on offering these sacrifices. That testimony, Paul claims as his unique assignment. Remember how this letter starts, Paul

an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ our hope.

His apostleship and preaching function is tied to this testimony that was withheld until its own time. It was not a testimony in the Old Testament. It was not a testimony in the days of the Lord Jesus.

The Lord Jesus did not go about preaching a gospel of faith in a substitutionary sacrifice for eternal life. Not once. What gospel does Jesus preach? Change your mind, the kingdom is at hand.

Repent and get ready for the kingdom. His forerunner, John the Baptist, what was his message? Repent, the kingdom of God is at hand. Now John says, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

But that topic, while true, is a seed to be planted. Jesus does not take that up. He doesn't speak it to the 5,000.

He doesn't speak it to the 4,000. He doesn't talk about it at length with his own disciples. It is a mystery.

It is a testimony that will be revealed in its own time. And that time is the time of the apostleship of Paul. Now, lest you think that this is, you know, kind of an exaggeration or a stretch, Paul's stewardship of this mystery is something that he himself emphasizes.

1 Corinthians 4.1. You might wanna write these verses down and go back and review them because when you put them all together, it's a powerful witness from scripture. And it's surprising that we don't pay more attention to it. 1 Corinthians 4.1. Let a man so account of us, Paul is talking about himself and his associates, as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Stewards of the mystery. When you are a steward, you are given oversight and charge over a specific resource or set of resources. Paul says our stewardship is the mysteries of God.

We are ministers of Christ. And he claims this somewhat uniquely. The dispensation of this gospel that he mentions in 1 Corinthians 4.1 is described further down in the book.

In chapter nine, Paul says in 9.17 of 1 Corinthians, if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward. But if against my will, a dispensation has been committed to me. He doesn't say if we apostles are serving to earn a reward.

He says, if I myself, a dispensation is committed unto me, me uniquely. 1 Corinthians 9.17. Paul says in Ephesians 3.9. If you're still in the vicinity of Ephesians 4, you can go back to 3.9. Paul says, starting in verse eight, to me who am less than the least of all the

saints, this grace was given. Notice to me, singular, individual.

He doesn't say I've been added to the group comprising the other 11 disciples slash apostles. He says to me, less than the least of all the sanctified ones. This grace was given that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And to make all see, there's another one of those alls, to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things through Jesus Christ. It was committed to me, it has been hidden in all the preceding ages to the intent that now, verse 10, this is its own time. Now, Paul's ministry, Paul's preaching, Paul's apostleship, to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church, not by Israel, not by the fulfillment of the kingdom promises in Old Testament days, in the Old Testament prophets, not the millennial kingdom fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant and so on, by the church.

To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. Paul's unique stewardship of the mystery in preaching church truth is a revelation even to the angels, to the principalities and powers. They didn't see it coming.

Satan didn't see it coming when he thought he had achieved a victory by having the Lord Jesus crucified before the kingdom could come. And I like to think God used the strategy of the indirect approach. He fooled Satan into thinking that he had sent the Lord Jesus to bring in the kingdom.

Satan ramps up enough opposition, both demonic and religious, to get Jesus arrested, tried, convicted, and crucified. Well, there can be no kingdom now. The king has been killed.

And God was in fact delaying the kingdom and bringing in the age of the church. This is the mystery committed to Paul. Peter didn't see it coming.

Jesus tried to explain the Son of Man is gonna be delivered into the hands of men, crucified, rise again the third day. But he couldn't understand it at that time. John, probably the most advanced and knowledgeable with his head resting in Jesus' bosom, didn't see this coming, didn't see the church coming.

It was not revealed, not revealed. Now, what are the implications of this in our current day? The big push, as we have seen over past months in postmodern Christianity, is to get away from Paul and get back to Jesus, which oddly enough, you wind up agreeing with the Muslims that Paul took what was a good thing under Jesus and messed it up with his Pauline doctrines and changing the gospel of peace and love and brotherhood and acceptance and no judgment and no warfare and no condemnation. And Paul took it

and turned it into all of this blood sacrifice, faith necessary and judgment is coming and so on.

And you can look this up. I'll read you just a snippet perhaps of this. But here's a writing by someone called The Sincere Seeker.

When Jesus Christ began his mission to call the Israelites back to God, many of the Israelites and Roman authorities were far astray from the truth. Israelites and Roman authorities rejected the message and teachings of Jesus Christ. A group of humble, sincere people of the Israelites believed and accepted his message and teachings.

They accepted that God had sent Jesus Christ to guide them to their creator. Jesus Christ asked the Israelites to be his helpers in God's cause to call them back to the worship of one God. Some of them responded.

This group of devoted followers, held in high esteem by Islam, submitted to God and pledged their allegiance to the Almighty and his messenger, Jesus Christ. These companions, helpers, supporters and friends of Christ were known as the 12 disciples or apostles. The name disciple or apostle is used to differentiate Jesus' close companions from the remainder of his followers whose numbers later grew.

When God elevated Jesus Christ to the heavens, the Jewish people remained persecuted and did not have much power. No uniform authority stood to establish and maintain the actual message and teachings of Jesus. Underline, highlight, the actual message and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The followers of Jesus Christ dissipated after his departure and little support remained to carry on his message. Except for those who witnessed Jesus Christ and relate his message and story to those who were not there, presenting it from their perspective. Later, strange new theories spread that were never preached by Jesus Christ.

From him being an imposter, to him being the divine son of God. Jesus as an imposter, this is a strange new teaching and that's a bad one. Jesus being the divine son of God, actually that is something Jesus did teach but Islam chooses not to believe it.

Around 35 of the common era, a man named Saul of Tarsus came. He later changed his name to Paul. Paul was a Roman citizen, a Jew and the enemy of Jesus Christ.

Are you with me? Paul was an enemy. He was a zealous persecutor and killer of Jesus Christ's faithful followers. En route from Jerusalem to Damascus, Paul claimed that he saw quote, the light when he saw Jesus Christ appearing to him, filling him with the Holy Spirit.

He was chosen and commanded to teach and preach acts that Jesus Christ never did to the masses. Paul taught concepts contradictory to what Jesus and faithful followers of

Jesus Christ were teaching. Paul provided no proof as to what he claimed to receive.

Paul provided no truth. Look back at your Bible, at first Timothy chapter two, our passage, in verse seven. I was appointed a preacher and apostle.

I am speaking the truth and not lying. We only have Paul's word for the fact that he is speaking the truth and not lying, but Paul says it anyway. You have in Christ there, you can scratch it out.

That's a later addition. He's not speaking the truth in Christ. He says, I'm speaking the truth and not lying.

Why does Paul have to say this? Even in Paul's day, he was being accused of being a liar, that Jesus did not appear to him. He wasn't commissioned as an apostle. The mystery that he was revealing as a part of his commission and his apostleship entrusted to him uniquely and especially by Jesus Christ and God the Father, as first Timothy 1.1 says, people said, that's a lie.

And Paul tells Timothy, I am telling the truth. I am not lying. I was commissioned.

I was assigned. I was granted the privilege of communicating this mystery that Jesus did not talk about in any great detail, that the Old Testament scriptures did not reveal. It was hidden.

And Paul says this over and over and over in letter after letter. And the more you assemble these passages, the more you realize that it is Paul and Paul alone to which this truth was entrusted. This is why Peter will say in 2 Peter, Paul says some things that are hard to understand.

People twist his words and people call him a liar. Well, this is the nature of that. Paul provided no proof as to what he claimed to receive.

And then he quotes Galatians 1.11 and 12, where Paul says, I want you to know brothers and sisters that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. Again, this is Galatians 1.11 and 12. It's one of the passages I have in my list.

Brothers and sisters, I want you to know the gospel I preach is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man. Paul didn't go to the 11 and say, now what was it that Jesus revealed? What are you all preaching? Let me get in on that and I'll preach it also.

I did not receive it from any man. It is not of human origin, nor was I taught it. Rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

Many people think that, many scholars, many Bible students think that when Paul talks about the three years, he went to Arabia and after three years came back, that the Lord Jesus spent the same amount of time teaching Paul as he spent teaching the 11. Jesus

spent just over three years teaching the 11. And evidently, the things that Paul says, I received from the Lord, I received from Jesus Christ.

Can you imagine how long it would take, even with his background and his being steeped in the Old Testament scriptures as a Pharisee, to come to understand the mystery, to understand and be able to reveal these details. Christ formed in you the hope of glory, the nature of the work of the Holy Spirit, the body of Christ, the church, age, mission, and function, and means, motive, and opportunity. So I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it.

It is not of human origin. How many times does he have to say it in Galatians 1, 11, and 12? Jesus Christ committed this directly to me. And he doesn't say we, he doesn't say, well, you know, John and Peter and I, Peter, James, and John and I went.

Paul is the apostle and the steward of this mystery. He and no other. You're not going to find it in the Petrine epistles.

You're not going to find it explicated in John. You find it in Paul. And half of our New Testament is Paul.

If you take out the gospels, it's practically all Paul. The gospels and Revelation and Paul, that's pretty much your, almost your entire New Testament. So while Jesus Christ, this is the Muslim speaking again, Jesus Christ is the central focus of Christianity, but the founder of modern Christianity is not Jesus Christ.

Instead, it is Paul, because the version of Christianity that has survived is not the version Jesus Christ preached. Instead, it was the version that Paul preached when he claimed Jesus Christ came to him in a vision and told him to preach new concepts. He converted to Christianity and wrongfully began calling people to worship Jesus Christ and spread strange teachings.

Notice, called them to worship Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ is divine. This is something Paul affirms and emphasizes, and Muslims don't believe Jesus Christ was divine. So Paul wrongfully began calling people to worship Jesus Christ and to spread strange teachings.

Due to his power, wealth, and relationships, people started to adopt these strange beliefs and teachings while the true disciples of Jesus Christ disapproved. The disciples clashed and argued with Paul because of his innovative and bizarre teachings, and the New Testament references this fact. Many Christians mistakenly took him as one of the disciples of Jesus due to his claim that he was, but he was not, nor did he ever meet Jesus Christ.

While some Christians elevate Paul to sainthood, Paul was responsible for destroying the teachings of Jesus Christ. He told people they did not need to follow God's laws, even

though Jesus Christ suffered and struggled to convey the message of God, which included teaching people to obey God's commandments. And they'll quote Jesus saying, one jot and one tittle will not pass from the law.

If anyone departs from the law and teaches others to do so, you know, he's in trouble. In fact, he quotes it. Many took Paul's word and believed him.

Jesus Christ never violated the laws of Moses that came before him. The Bible clearly states, till heaven and earth pass, the one that breaks the law will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Truly I tell you, till heaven and earth pass, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the law until everything is accomplished.

Therefore, anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. This is out of Matthew 5. This verse explicitly states that anyone that breaks the law or teaches others to break the law will be called the least person in the kingdom of heaven.

On the contrary, the verse states that whoever practices and teaches the law will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Almost all the concepts of modern day teaching of Christianity, including the concept of Jesus Christ being the son of God and atonement, two central concepts that have just been affirmed in our passage in 1 Timothy, are from Paul and not from the teachings of Jesus Christ. As such, the teachings of Paul contradict the teachings of Jesus.

Well, you can look up and read the rest of this point of view. It is shared, by the way, by Bart Ehrman. There is an entire article on this from Ehrman that you can look up and read or find it in his books.

But Paul's stewardship of the mystery, how can we know? Are we just going to say, well, how can I believe Paul if he's... It's a circular argument. Paul says that Jesus appeared to him and that he's telling the truth. So we'll believe Paul because Paul says he's telling the truth.

Where is my affirmation? And this gets back to the idea that people who want the text to be its own proof. How do you know the word of God is the word of God? Well, the word of God says it's the word of God. The word of God says all scripture is God-breathed, all scripture is inspired.

Men wrote as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit, Peter says, but that's the word of God. Saying the word of God is inspired scripture. So the Bible itself has a circular argument to its own authority.

Paul has a circular argument to his own authority. 99.99% of the people that Paul knew

weren't on the Damascus road with him. In fact, 100% of them weren't there.

And so we only have Paul's word that Jesus met him on the Damascus road, that the Lord Jesus revealed things to him, perhaps when he was in Arabia and went to Sinai and so on. So how can we possibly place our faith in something that has circular support? What does that overlook? In the mouth of two or three witnesses, a thing is established, right? And typically different witnesses have different points of view. They're standing in a different place.

They have a different kind of authority. What are our witnesses? Do we rely only on the text? In fact, the testimony of Paul is actually the testimony of scripture. So if scripture is only attesting to itself and we don't trust that attestation, then why would we believe that Paul even said this, much less that his testimony is support for the veracity and truth of his apostolic claim and his mystery revelations? It just all seems like it's a tautology.

It just is circular and folds in on itself. What does that view overlook? Ask and it shall be given. Seek and you will find.

Knock and the door will be opened. This is a promise of God. Yes, it is in scripture, but we also have the promise and the witness and the testimony of God's Holy Spirit.

And this is something we experience. I can feel the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. I say feel somewhat reluctantly, but I can tell that the Holy Spirit is at work in impressing upon me uncomfortable truths.

Less to myself, I would be in self-justification mode all the time. It would always be somebody else's fault. I would never take responsibility and accountability except that God the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin and the Holy Spirit convicts the world.

And Romans tells us that those who suppress that truth in unrighteousness, what may be known of God is manifest in creation. We have the witness of creation. We have the witness of the spirit.

We have eternity in our hearts. We have the witness of our own human conscience that tells us there is wrong and I am guilty of it. It would be so easy to push it all away.

And this is what the unbelieving world does. It's not my fault. I was born this way, the environment.

If you'd made a better country and you weren't a bunch of institutionally bigoted and oppressive people, if you weren't colonial and this, that, and the other, if you'd created a better world for me to grow up in, I'd have been a better person. And we prevaricate. We lie to ourselves and lie to others.

It is the word of God that says, our heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. It is the word of God that says, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It is the word of God that says, there is none that doeth righteousness.

No, not one of these, the fool that says in his heart, there is no God and so on. So this is faith. And our faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

And we find that there is a recognition and there is an affirmation in our soul. The Holy Spirit, when we are asking and seeking and knocking, lets us know, you don't have to take Paul's word for it. The Holy Spirit says, take my divine word for it.

This is God's truth. Do you notice how it convicts? Do you notice how it confers power to produce the fruit of the spirit? Do you notice how these words and these truths create unity? The Holy Spirit sheds God's love abroad in our hearts and we see it and we experience it and we are able to express it in a supernatural way. We have supernatural patience, supernatural joy, supernatural peace.

It is the scripture that tells us, Jesus said, my peace, I leave with you. My peace, I give to you. This is not the kind of peace you get in the world.

Temporary, ephemeral, circumstance-based. Circumstance changes, somebody's loyalties and their fickle heart moves in a different direction. Now I have no peace, I have no joy, I have no ongoing relationship.

This person I trusted, I can't trust anymore. I've been betrayed, there's treachery, there's harm, there's emotional damage, there's trauma. I've been broken and I can't be fixed.

You know, the broken hearted is a theme of half the music that's ever been written. We find the truth to be true because we experience the truth in the same way that we find sin and evil to be egregiously harmful and painful because we experience that. Is our experience of sin and evil false? No.

Is our experience of love and grace false? No. We experience both and we find both to be true and it is affirmed in our soul and then we make a choice. Of these realities of sin and evil and pain and sorrow, heartache, suffering and grace, forgiveness, cleansing, love, joy, peace, supernatural ability to be better than we are and to have a hope that sustains, that is reality.

People like a particular diet plan because you know, I tried a bunch of things but this one worked. When the power of God comes into our soul, we discover that works. That's got a power I never had.

People that break out of addictions by the grace and power of God, people that break out of confusion about their gender or whatever else in life, about their choices to live a

certain lifestyle or go down a certain road and they come to faith in Christ and there is supernatural divine power for change that the world cannot find and cannot give, that's the reality. So when Paul says, I'm telling you the truth and not lying, that is actually true and what is he testifying about? Paul's letters are the source of the mystery and what is the final conclusion here? This move to push Christianity back to the teachings of Christ and to diminish if not eliminate altogether, Paul's letters is a grievous misunderstanding. Jesus Christ came and taught in the age of Israel.

What does he himself say? Read the red ink. I am sent only to whom? The lost sheep of the house of Israel. That's why the message of the kingdom is Israel's kingdom, Israel's king.

That's the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel that Paul preaches and that he claims and uses the first person possessive pronoun according to my gospel. And you have this, for example, in Ephesians chapter three, verse four. When you read, you will understand my knowledge of the mystery of Christ, my knowledge, this unique stewardship that he has and so he talks about his gospel.

And in Ephesians chapter six, verse 19, he says, pray for me that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, the not previously revealed gospel. This is years after the Lord Jesus came and went, years after the preaching by the 12 and by the 70 throughout Israel. How could it be a mystery at that late date when Jesus revealed it? And it's the gospel of Jesus and the gospel of the disciples.

This is a new gospel. The mystery is that there is no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, that there is the body of Christ and that that body is created through substitutionary atonement and the mediatorship of Christ that brings all men, regardless of origins, regardless of relationship to Abraham, to God through himself. He is the mediator of a new covenant.

He's not fulfilling an old covenant alone. He is the mediator of a new covenant. Jesus doesn't talk about this until the upper room.

This is the new covenant in my blood. It's new at the cross and the cross and the work of Jesus on the cross was a mystery. If it had been revealed, Satan would have had a whole different agenda in trying to stop it.

Satan thought he succeeded and was victorious in stopping the inception of the kingdom. And he felt like he won the battle, but he lost the war at the cross. And the Lord Jesus defeated the one who had the power of death.

Because he defeated death itself. Anytime you start hearing this drift toward, we've got to get back to the origins of Christianity. We need to go back to the gospels and to the

teaching of the Lord Jesus, not to diminish the importance of the teaching of Jesus any more than the entirety of the Old Testament, but our manifesto, our gospel, our marching orders, our identity, our mission in life is revealed as body of Christ in the Pauline epistles.

And that is where we must go to understand who we are and why we're here. We can certainly learn from every other, all scripture is God-breathed and profitable. Who tells us that? Paul.

But the mystery, Christ in you, the hope of glory and how to attain it and achieve it, it's Paul. Without Paul, we don't know who we are or why we're here. Well, more about this next time, we'll close in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the revelation you have given to us through the Lord Jesus Christ, first and foremost, and the explanation and the fullness that we have through your servant, the apostle Paul. We thank you for his faithfulness and the testimony that you have preserved for us down through the centuries so that we can, by your grace and by the presence and power of your Holy Spirit, live the life to which we have been called to represent the Lord Jesus Christ on this earth, to shine as a light, to draw others through Christ to you, and to be prepared for service and function both now and in the ages to come. We pray that these truths will live and breathe their power in us in the hours and days ahead so that the Lord Jesus will be glorified in everything we say and do.

We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.