

1Tim 24-02-14b

We have seen how important it is to understand the beauty of God's unfolding plan, the progress of revelation in scripture, and to not mash down or oversimplify the gospel. There is good news, and the overarching content and theme of that is that God in Christ is reconciling the world to Himself. But it is an option, it is a potential, and because God has also granted each and every human being the gift of free will, just as He did His angelic creation, it is a choice as to whether or not we enter into that relationship, that deliverance, to be released from slavery to sin and to enter into wonderful father-child relationship with the Creator God of the universe through the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was incipient, it was anticipated, it was communicated in shadow form, and that revelation has gradually unfolded. What we want to look at now is the continuation of that revelation. It does not stop with the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.

It does not stop with the sacrifice, the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross that satisfies the righteousness and justice of God and makes it possible, because He was made sin for us who knew no sin, now we can be made the righteousness of God in Him. The critical phrase there is, in Him. He made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made.

It's conditional, it's potential. Why doesn't it just continue in the perfect, in the completed tense? He made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, and we were made the righteousness of God in Him. This is how so many people want to interpret the gospel today.

It's not true, it's a lie, and by failing to communicate that this is a potential, and it must be laid hold of by faith. Faith is non-meritorious, you don't get credit for it. It's the right thing to do.

It's the necessary self-preserving option, and you have to be willfully opposed to God to not accept the gift of His love and grace in Christ. But scores, untold millions, hundreds of millions of people across the centuries have rejected God's grace, before Christ and after Christ. And that rejection is self-determination.

It is not the will of God that any should perish, but that all come to repentance, and yet all don't. We might be made, we can potentially be made the righteousness of God in Him. In Him is a key, and what we're going to look at now is this sevenfold post-cross revelation of the mystery, and all of it comes through the Apostle Paul.

We started in the first session looking at the Lord Jesus, talking to His disciples, explaining why He speaks to Israel in parables, so that hearing, they will hear and not perceive. Seeing, they will see and not perceive. Hearing, they will hear and not understand.

Why? Because their hearts are hard, and it reveals the hard heart. The hard heart, the carnal mind will never understand spiritual truths, because they are spiritually discerned. And when we harden our hearts and push away the spiritual, push away the opportunity to receive the ministry of God's Spirit, it is impossible.

Even when you remember in Hebrews chapter 6, it is impossible. I'll turn and read it so that I don't misquote it. Hebrews chapter 6, it is impossible, verse 4, for those who were once enlightened and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, it is impossible, the author says, to renew them again to repentance, to the first element in the list, Hebrews 6, 1, not laying again the foundation of repentance, change of mind, away from dead works and faith toward God.

You can't even get to step one. You can't even get your foot across the threshold in the doorway. You can't even begin to enter into blessing and opportunity and the blessedness of salvation.

It is impossible to renew them again to repentance, much less the rest of the list. Since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God. They're not post-cross.

Do you want to know what this really means to crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh? You're back in the days of the Lord Jesus. You're not listening to the revelation of the mystery. You're still waiting for the crucifixion.

You're still waiting for the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices, and you can't see beyond it. It's a wall. It's a veil that lies over their minds and over their hearts, Paul says.

The veil remains unremoved. It's Moses with a bag on his head. They can't see the coming glory.

We have to get past the cross. We have to love and learn from everything in the Old Testament, love and learn from everything in the Gospels, especially the preaching and the teaching and the illustrations and the parables of the Lord Jesus. But we've got to move on, not laying again that foundation.

That's just the foundation. Do you want to live on a concrete slab? We want to build. And if the veil remains unlifted, if the heart remains hard, and if you can't move beyond the foundation, you crucify to ourselves again the Son of God and put him to an open shame, because the reason for which he came, the onward progress and unfolding of the Father's plan is opaque.

It's unknown. It remains a mystery. Well, what is this mystery that Paul reveals? I'm going to give it to you in seven points.

These are Dr. Criswell's points. You can find this on our WA Criswell website. But if we

have ears to hear, we're going to hear.

So, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2, turn there, 1 Corinthians 2. We did 1 Corinthians not that long ago, and we covered this. I, brethren, when I came to you, I did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. Think about that.

I didn't come declaring to you the testimony of God. Remember the testimony is the law. To the law, to the testimony.

And depending on which text you believe, is it the word testimony or is it the word mystery? Is it musterion? Either way, it is not eloquence of presentation. I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I started at the cross.

I'm not starting with the Old Testament. I'm not Apollos explaining the law. I'm not going back and talking about love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself.

That's done. That's complete. Other messengers have brought that message.

I didn't know anything prior to Jesus Christ and Him crucified. When I got among you Corinthians, that's the starting place. Our ground, our foundation is Christ and Him crucified.

I was with you in weakness, fear, much trembling. My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. What is the innovation when the Lord Jesus comes? There were miracles.

There were demonstrations of God's power in the Old Testament, but they were sporadic. They authenticated the message. They authenticated the message when the Lord Jesus came.

He said, if you don't want to believe my words, believe the works because they are done in the power of God's Spirit and they authenticate the message. Every new dispensation has been introduced with manifestations of God's power to authenticate the messengers that speak of this new economy, this new set of promises and new ways of doing things in God's plan and purpose. Paul says, I came to you with demonstrations of the Spirit and of power.

Why? So that your faith would not be in the wisdom of men, my persuasive words, my articulation of the law and the shadows. Your faith would be in the power of God. How much access to the power of God did the average Israelite have in Old Testament days? An individual Israelite from the time of the Exodus, go out into the wilderness, camp at the foot of Mount Sinai, traverse that wilderness for 40 years.

Individual Israelites, the group, the nation, pillar of cloud, pillar of fire, provision of manna, all manner of supernatural manifestations of God's power to the nation. But in an individual life, an individual family, where is the power of God? It's you access the power of God through the group by being a member of the people of God with the leaders. Moses experiences God's power at first hand.

Joshua, God speaks to him from the tent. There are rare occasions where leaders, where prophets, where the King of Israel receives individual enablement. David and Goliath.

But these are rare and special and prototypical. What characterizes this age? Paul says, I came to you and I'm not giving you a bunch of fancy argumentation and oratorical flourish. I'm demonstrating to you that the power of God has come to the individual believer.

You individually, not the nation baptized in the Red Sea. You individually baptized by the Holy Spirit. You individually enabled and empowered with a spiritual gift.

My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom. Not that Paul couldn't do that. He's a trained Pharisee.

He's steeped in the law. But when he comes to Corinth, he lays all of that aside and he says, watch this. Here's the spirit of God who is in our midst.

So your faith would not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. I wasn't swayed by persuasive oratorical argumentation. However, verse six, we speak wisdom.

We do speak wisdom among those who are telios. Telios, this means the end. This is something that finishes.

And it comes to mean, in the old King James, it's translated perfect. Perfect in the sense of complete, but it has the idea of mature. And in this context, you find this out.

So when Paul first comes, he says, this is the age of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is here. This is the spirit of Christ.

He is going to reveal the magnitude of the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, at the cross, the power of the resurrection. I pray that I may come to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, Paul says. And that resurrection power, that Holy Spirit power is what Paul leads with.

This is the foundation for your faith. But once you take that on board, once you decide for it, once you're persuaded by it, once you place your faith in it, your faith is in the power of God. Now I'll speak wisdom.

Now you're ready. Now you're receptive. Your heart is open.

Your ears are unstopped. The scales have fallen from your eyes. Now you can understand.

Remember Paul on the road to Damascus is struck blind and struck down by the power of the presence of the Lord Jesus. Jesus says, I'm calling you to great things, but I'm not telling you today. It is a demonstration of power and Paul sees the power of the resurrected Christ.

And here's the power in the resurrected voice of the Lord Jesus. It's hard for you to kick against the pricks. Go on to Damascus.

And it is later that Paul goes probably to Mount Sinai. It is years and the Lord Jesus gives him the wisdom after the power hits. We speak wisdom among those who are mature, but not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are coming to nothing.

Those who seem to be in power, who seem to be influential, who seem to be making it and succeeding and prevailing and overcoming. They're coming to nothing. We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery.

We come to it now. Paul's gospel is gospel of the mystery. It's a sevenfold mystery.

We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the ages for our glory. Make a note, circle it. Part of the good news, the mystery is us partaking of God's glory, our glory.

It's not human glory. It's not Sam glory. It's not fill in your name here glory.

But God ordained these things and didn't reveal them until Paul in order that we could enter into glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew. Who are the rulers of this age? Principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age. Satan and his minions, Satan and the fallen angels.

None of the rulers of this age knew, had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Who crucified the Lord of glory? People say the Jews. I'm anti-Semitic because they crucified Jesus, forgetting that Jesus himself is a Jew from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David.

He's as Jewish as it gets. He's the King of the Jews. And yet down through the centuries, people in the church have been anti-Semitic because, well, you know, you all crucified Jesus.

You're bad people. Jesus, God rejected you. And so I'm going to reject you.

It's just nuts. It's nonsense. Who crucified the Lord of glory? The rulers of this age.

Satan engineered. Remember, Satan entered into Judas's heart to betray him. Satan was

behind that.

There was demonic influence on the religious leaders. That bitter hatred, they made themselves available to the darkness of the rulers of this age through hatred, through getting their eyes on people, being subjective. And even though they believe in God and they believe that he rewards those who diligently seek him, they go so far in the direction of hate, so far in the direction of selfish desire for power, for approval, for acceptance, for riches, gratifying the desires of the flesh, that even as saved Israelites, they are tools of Satan.

Paul talks to the Galatians who get trapped in this legalistic system of the Judaizers and says, you're cut off from Christ. You're enemies of the cross. If they had, they know they would not have crucified the Lord of glory as it is written.

And here you have the gospel of the mystery. I have not seen nor ear heard nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love him. Go to the next verse, but God has revealed them to us.

These previously unrevealed things, even up to and including the days of the Lord Jesus and his three-year ministry of declaring the gospel of the kingdom to Israel. I never saw or never heard didn't enter into their hearts. The things that God has revealed, they could not be revealed until the rulers of this age crucify the Lord of glory and seal the victory.

Just when they think they have won, they have brought about God's victory. Now, after the cross, after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, these things are revealed to us through his spirit. The spirit searches all things.

Yes, the deep things of God. And we receive them and we understand them through the ministry of the spirit. And as you continue in chapter two, you find this reiterated in verse 12.

We've received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit who is from God, so that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. The things that are freely given to us in this age by God aren't in the old Testament and they're not in the sermon on the mount and they're not revealed in the parables. We're about to see the revelation if we are susceptible, if we are amenable, if we are cultivating the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit within us, what does Paul say? Man's wisdom will not teach them.

It's the Holy Spirit that teaches them, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, spiritual things to spiritual souls, spiritual truth to spiritual people. The spirit is pitching and the spirit is catching. And if we are not spiritual, if we are operating in the flesh, living in the flesh, this stuff will not be exciting.

It won't be meaningful. It won't enable and empower us to live a supernatural life. The natural man does not receive the things of the spirit of God.

They are foolishness to him, nor can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. The spirit has to bear witness with our spirit. He who is spiritual judges all things, parses them, understands them, uses them to navigate the world.

That's what judging is. I judge what's right. I judge what's wrong.

I judge a good path. I discern a bad path. He himself is judged by no one who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him.

But we have the mind of Christ. Did Jesus talk about sharing his mind when he was preaching in Galilee and in Judea and in Transjordan and up in the region of the Syrophoenicians? Did Jesus talk about having his mind, having his spirit, being indwelt and filled and have the mysteries of God's plan and purpose revealed? That is not in the Gospels. Not till the upper room, only the 11 who are about to be the apostles who are going to come to know this and the apostles are going to learn a lot of it from Paul.

The guy that got there last is going to let the rest of the apostles know what's going on. Peter says, boy, some of this stuff that Paul's revealing is hard to understand and people are twisting it to their own destruction. But he says, you need to pay attention to our brother Paul.

Paul's got it. John is an entity unto himself. John is so special.

We'll do a special on John one of these days. But these things were not revealed until Paul. What are they? Number one, assuming that we are ready, that we are telios, that we are perfect.

God is ready to reveal these things to us by his spirit. The first mystery of this sevenfold mystery is the incarnation of Jesus Christ. That's our study in first Timothy.

Flip over to first Timothy chapter three. This is where we are on Sundays. And that's the reason I'm doing this special.

First Timothy chapter three, verse 16, without controversy, without argument, without dispute. Great is the mystery of Eusebio. It's translated godliness, but the word God is not in it.

U E U is good. And the best part of that has to do with deep truths. Spirit.

I would translate this spiritual things. It was used even for, for worship and respect for the gods in the secular or the pagan Greek culture, the non-Christian Greek culture. Eusebio was, you know, people say, I'm a spiritual person.

I'm, I'm tuned into the deeper things. It always kind of amuses me when, when someone says, I just want to be in the moment. I just want to be present.

I want to, to, to live and connect. I want to be connected to the earth and connected to the, to nature. And I just, this is Eusebio.

This is something beyond food, clothing, and shelter, something beyond basic physical needs, something beyond the material world, a sense of the grandeur and the otherness that characterizes our sentient thought life. And that there is something greater than myself. There's something going on more than, than the physical and the mundane and the earthly and the temporal and the transient, what an animal would understand.

Your dog as smart as he or she is, can't enter into Eusebio because it is a product of the soul of being sensitive to something beyond my current understanding. There's something going on here. There's a plan.

There's a purpose. There's a presence. What may be known of God, of God is manifest in creation.

Romans chapter one, what be known of God, his eternal power and Godhead. This creates the sense of Eusebio. Well, once you have this sense, where do you aim it? You can aim it at idols.

You can aim it at some other religious system, or you can aim it at God. So great is the mystery without controversy. Great is the mystery of spiritual things.

Here is the revelation. See if you see any of this in the old Testament. See if you see any of this in the sermon on the Mount, any of this in the parables of Jesus.

Here it is. All of these are passives in Greek. Every one of these is passive.

God is not there. Your first word, scratch it out. It's hos in Greek, who great is the mystery of spirituality.

And now Paul launches in and even in your new King James, see how it's phrased as poetry. It's it's typed, typed here as poetry. So great is the mystery of spiritual truth.

Who was manifested? Notice was manifested. This is a passive. This is from phaneroo, caused to appear, caused to be manifest.

Who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit. And really there's no articles here in the English translation. This should be who was manifested in flesh.

Manifested in flesh, declared righteous, justified, declared righteous in spirit. And the juxtaposition here makes you think that it is the flesh of the Lord Jesus that is in view. And it is the spirit of the Lord Jesus that was demonstrated to be righteous.

He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin. He suffered the just for the unjust. He never committed a sin.

He knew no sin. He was tested in all points like as we are yet without sin. Nobody could bring a charge on Jesus' account.

The religious leaders tried to charge him with breaking the law of Moses. He fulfilled the law. He didn't come to destroy it, but to fulfill it and to embody it and to explain it.

So who this mystery, the mystery was manifest in flesh, vindicated, justified, declared righteous in spirit, seen by Angeloi. I would argue that this is one of those rare cases where the word is not talking about heavenly angels. It strikes a discordant note here.

Don't the angels see everything? Aren't they flying about in the invisible realms and the watchers? And in Israel, everybody knew that, you know, angels are everywhere. They're all seeing. Seen by messengers.

Why is this important? You shall be witnesses, Martyr Roy unto me. Jesus was revealed in the flesh, declared righteous in spirit, seen by messengers. Who can attest? Remember how John starts his first epistle, that which our eyes have seen, which our hands have handled.

We're messengers. We are witnesses. That's why I think John's one of the two witnesses in Revelation, he and James.

Who better? Who spent more time with the Lord? James and John are down there at the River Jordan. They're part of the initial crew. James, John, Peter, Andrew, Philip, and his, you know, the first six, Nathaniel.

They're there when Jesus comes to the Jordan. That which our eyes have seen, which our hands have handled, the word of life, this is what we communicate to you, John says. Seen by messengers, it was important that he be witnessed and attested by eyewitnesses.

Angeloi preached. Notice all of these are passive. He was manifested.

He was justified. He was seen, observed. And this word in Greek has the idea, it's optho.

It has the idea of stared at, watched closely. This isn't making a glance. This is not bleppo.

I glanced over and saw it. This is optho. This is stared at, concentrated on by these messengers.

What do you think the disciples did for that entire earthly ministry? They could hardly take their eyes off the Lord Jesus. Just so interesting. So unusual.

What a privilege. Preached among the nations. Announced.

Broadcast. Believed on in the cosmos. Then we back up.

Received up. This is *ana lambano*. *Ana* means up or sometimes again, but it means to take up.

Paul uses it in one of his letters when he says, pick up Timothy on your way through, pick him up, bring him along. It means literally, *lambano* is to receive up, received up in glory. All of these are passive, but all of these are mystery.

Nobody knew that the Lord Jesus was going to be God in the flesh, Emmanuel. It's foreshadowed. It's prophesied, but who knew what Emmanuel meant? Well, is this the embodiment of the suffering servant in the people of Israel? And you know, God with us, God in our midst, God's going to return.

He'll inhabit the temple and he will be our God. We will be his people. What does it, what does Emmanuel mean? God with us.

It was a mystery until it was revealed in the Lord Jesus that he would be perfect, that he would be virgin born and uncorrupted by the sin of Adam, that he would be accompanied by witnesses who would follow him and then testify to him after he left, because they are going to preach him, not just in Israel, but preached among the nations who saw that. Well, we knew that the Israel would be a light to the Gentiles and, and in Abraham, all families of the earth will be blessed, but that this incarnate presence of God would be preached to the nations. It's not Israel being preached to the nations come proselyte.

It's this mystery who was manifest in flesh, declared righteous in spirit, seen by messengers, preached among the nations. Nobody saw that coming, believed on in the world. Not just Israel is going to believe in their Messiah, but these people in the world are going to believe on him unto redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, salvation.

Nobody saw that avenue. They thought, well, they'll be saved by coming and joining the people of God in Israel. Like proselytes always have received up in glory that this incarnate presence of God would ascend and be received into the presence of God himself, there to intercede, there to represent.

You don't find that in the old Testament. You don't find that in the gospels, the preaching of Jesus, otherwise it's not there. Paul says, this is a great mystery in the realm of spiritual things.

Who else? And it's who on purpose? It's not God. And it's not even the Lord Jesus. Jesus is the mystery.

He's the embodiment. He's the expression. He is the revelation of the mystery.

That's number one, the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ and all of these things that come through him. The second one, Colossians 1, 25 through 28. Colossians 1, 25 through 28.

Paul says, I rejoice in my sufferings. I fill up in my flesh, what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his body, which is the church of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God, which was given to me for you to fulfill the word of God, to flesh it out, to put meat on the bones, to explain it, to reveal it, to detail it. The mystery, which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to his saints, to the Telios ones, to the ones who have entered in by faith into the power of God.

We speak this wisdom among the perfect, among the mature, among the developed, those who have traveled the road. To them, God will to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations, among the ethnoi, among the Gentiles, which is what? The indwelling Christ. First element of the mystery, Jesus has come and inhabited human flesh, witnessed, declared righteous, preached to the nations, believed on in the world and received up into glory.

He did it perfectly. And God says, well done, my good and faithful servant. This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

He is now, although he was made a little lower than the angels, he is now ascended into glory. Christ in you. The second element of the mystery is the indwelling, the presence of Christ in us and among us.

And it is the hope of glory. Remember the glory that we saw earlier? Christ in you. This is the potential to the extent that Christ is revealed in and through us, in our lives, the mundane, seemingly insignificant details, our attitudes, our words, our decisions, our priorities, our goals, our values.

Christ in you. How much of the life of the Lord Jesus on this earth is unrevealed in Scripture? He was here 33 years. We have episodes, we have events, we have circumstances revealed, we have snippets of preaching.

Jesus was here 33 years. Doing what? Living a life that revealed the glory of God, that demonstrated righteousness, vindicated, justified in his flesh and in his spirit. So, Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Do these have application? Can I pray to God the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that we have an advocate with the Father, we have an intercessor who knows what it's like to be us? You can't say nobody knows the trouble I've seen. The Lord Jesus has seen it. We have an advocate with the Father.

The Holy Spirit conveys our prayers and the Lord Jesus represents and affirms and

intercedes on our behalf. What a privilege. You find that in your Old Testament anywhere? No.

It's New Testament truth, not revealed until Paul reveals it. It's not in the Gospels. It's in Romans.

So, we are initiated into these great heretofore unrevealed truths from God, the unfolding of God's plan. Satan didn't see it coming. What's he going to do? We've got a shield of faith and we can quench his fiery darts.

He may roam the earth seeking whom he may devour, but we can resist him steadfast in the faith. We've got the armor of God. Nobody had the armor of God in the Old Testament.

Jesus didn't talk about the armor of God in the Sermon on the Mount or the Sermon on the Plain or he didn't use the armor of God as a parable. He didn't talk about running with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Moses, the author and finisher of our Old Testament covenant promise faith. We look unto Jesus, the author and finisher.

This is a new and living way. So, that's the second. Jesus has inhabited our flesh.

That's the first aspect. He now not only came in the flesh, but he can indwell us. How many truths are revealed in that? The third aspect of the mystery, the mystery of the church, Ephesians chapter three, flip back from Colossians past Philipians to Ephesians chapter three.

I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ for you nations people, you Gentiles, if you've heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which was given to me for you by revelation, he made known to me the mystery, as I've briefly revealed already, which when you read, you will understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. My knowledge, it was revealed to me. I've been given this stewardship.

I, Paul, am the steward of the gospel of the good news of Jesus Christ, which in other ages, verse five, was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed. How? By the spirit. To whom? His holy apostles and prophets, starting with the apostle Paul, who is sharing it with the other apostles.

They didn't get it from Jesus and give it to Paul. Paul says, I didn't go up to Jerusalem. It was 14 years before I saw these guys, because Jesus revealed it to me.

I went and got the right hand of fellowship from Peter and John, and I told them the mystery that Jesus had revealed. And Peter says, wow, it blows my mind. John says, now I understand what the Lord was talking about in the upper room, the high priestly prayer, I in you, you in me, all of us in the father.

John is the one that records that prayer. It makes sense to him. Once Paul reveals this mystery, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ through the gospel, this new gospel, nothing previously said the Gentiles were going to be fellow heirs and co-partakers and that believers in Jesus Christ would form a new and separate body that isn't Israel.

It's a new thing. It's a new creation. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creation.

He's in a new creation. Old things are passed away. All things should become new.

Not just the old life, not just the old ways, not just the old slavery to sin, but you're part of a new creation, a new happening, a new paradigm that God has created in this age. Whatever our current circumstances, however much we're prevailing or suffering or winning or losing when it comes to the observation of men, we are part of a new creation. We are body of Christ.

Can't change. You can't be unborn. You can't be disconnected.

There's nothing that can separate us from the love of God in Christ. No height, no depth. There's no created thing that can separate us from the love of God.

Got an Old Testament promise that is the equivalent. No, it's new. It's a part of the mystery.

But the Gentiles, we, us, fellow heirs of the same body, partakers of His promise in Christ, His promise, God, the Father's promise in Christ, in Him, glory in Him, we in Him, He indwelling us. It's a mystery. It's a new thing.

What a privilege. What a revelation. What an opportunity.

Through the gospel of which I became a minister, verse 7, Ephesians 3, according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. The effective working of His power puts this gift and this information in Paul's hands, in Paul's mouth, in Paul's writings. That's where it comes from.

To me, who am less than the least of all saints, this grace was given. He doesn't say to us, the apostles. He says it's now revealed to the prophets and apostles.

These are, by the way, New Testament prophets. This is the temporary gift of prophecy. People began to prophesy.

And you know, this preaching you're hearing from Paul, that's the real deal. That's the true stuff. We're not under the law.

We're under grace. Listen to Paul. The holy apostles and prophets are saying, wow, he's the steward of the mystery.

To preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery. This new creation in Christ where there is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither slave nor free.

There is neither male nor female. The fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God. Hidden from the beginning of time.

Not revealed in the books of the Old Testament. The law, the prophets, the writings. Anticipated, seen through a glass darkly, dimly hoped for.

From the ages, hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ. To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known. How? By the church.

Not by Israel. Not even by the cross. The manifold wisdom of God is not made known in the cross.

Isn't that something? It isn't even manifest and made known through Jesus. Through the church. Through the church.

It's you. It's me. It's us.

The indwelling of Christ. The filling of the spirit. The laying hold of the wisdom of God in faith and putting it into practice to the intent that the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church.

To whom? The principalities and the powers. It's not angels looking at the Lord Jesus in 1 Timothy 3. It's the human messengers that were observing Him in His incarnation. Who are the angels looking at, fallen and unfallen? The church.

We are the object lesson for the angels. This is the fulfillment of God's purpose in resolving what has been called the angelic conflict. The split of choice between the fallen and unfallen angels.

To the intent that the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in heavenly places. In the heavenlies. Your life, however insignificant and unremarkable it may seem, is an object lesson to principalities and powers in the heavens.

Because you are church. You are body of Christ. And you count.

You matter. You're important. Every waking moment.

Your thoughts. I think probably even some of our sleeping moments. You make decisions in your dreams, don't you? I've often thought about that.

And I try not to make bad decisions even in my dreams. Hey, I think I'm dreaming. I can

just run amok.

I don't think so. I think our dreams are a test of our attitudes. Are we fearful? Are we uncertain? Are we aware of who we are and why we're here? But we are an object lesson to the principalities and powers in the spiritual realms.

In the heavenlies. According to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus. It's a done deal in Christ.

Our Lord. In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore, I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you.

It's your glory. The more I'm out here revealing this mystery. Preaching the gospel of the good news of the mystery.

The more glory is available to you. Well, we're going to continue our special on Sunday morning. Only got through three of the seven.

But they are so good. They are so profound. So motivating.

So important for us to understand we are and why we're here in Christ. And not to be dragged back into a yoke of bondage. Not back into spirituality by works.

Not back into a gospel of the gospels. That minimizes, diminishes, and largely ignores the presence and the power of Christ through the Holy Spirit. In the revealed truth of the Pauline epistles, and by extension the Petrine epistles, and the Johannine epistles, and the book of Revelation.

All of which are built on this foundation of the revelation of the mystery. Revelation isn't built on the gospels. John and Peter, James, and certainly Paul, don't build their teaching on the foundation that you find in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

It is church age truth that undergirds and makes those passages breathe and flame and live and matter in our souls. So important to understand this mystery. Well, that's the first three elements.

The incarnation of Christ in flesh. The incarnation of Christ dwelling in us. More of which we will see on Sunday morning.

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Paul says, I am in labor pains until Christ is formed in you. What does that mean? Paul says, I'm in agony.

I'm like suffering a woman about to give birth until Christ is formed in you. That's the goal. Christ in you is the hope of glory.

Christ in you. Look around today. Listen to progressive Christianity.

Listen to the deconstruct, reconstruct. Listen to the victory now, and if we build it, he will come. See if you can find anybody talking about Christ formed in you.

There is no glory apart from the presence and the power of Jesus Christ in and through the Spirit, in and through the word. There is no power. You're teaching his doctrines, the traditions of men.

And it is shallow. It is powerless. It will ultimately fail.

It will crumble. When the storms come, that house is going to be pieces of lumber splintered in the sand. This is so important for us to understand.

We'll see more of it this coming Sunday. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, what a privilege to live in this age.

What a wonderful opportunity to be indwelt through the presence of your word and the power of your Spirit, to have the presence of the Lord Jesus himself within us, that you and he will come and make your home with us. What an opportunity. And we pray that we can be worthy of it, that we will value it, recognize its potential and pursue those priorities and make those decisions that will enable it to come to pass.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.