

1Tim 24-02-18b

We're ready now to resume our study. We have seen the first three aspects in our somewhat arbitrarily ordered list of mystery truths that are uniquely revealed by and through the Apostle Paul, and there's just no getting around it. He is central to the truth that the body of Christ, the church, must understand.

You can't get it anywhere in the Old Testament. You cannot get it in the four gospels. Interestingly, you do not even get it in Jesus speaking to the seven churches in Revelation chapter two and three.

There are some allusions, but it's not taught. It's not explained. It's not applied.

It isn't given as a source of hope, motivation, of the substance of faith and the outworking of love. Even in Revelation, even in first and second Peter, there are some allusions, but if you want the fullness, if you want to make tracks and gain momentum as a believer in the church age, it is Paul or you haven't got it. In the same way that in Israel, if you don't have Moses, what have you got? All of the allusions in the Psalms to the Word of God, the principles and the promises, the statutes, the ordinances, the judgments, the words, the commandments, all of that is referring back to the law.

The prophets had not yet been written when David and the others composed those Psalms. It was the law, and it came by Moses. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and the fullness of that grace and the revelation of that truth comes by God's grace through the least of the apostles by his own reckoning, Paul.

So we've seen the first aspect, which is the incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus. We have seen the mystery of the indwelling of Jesus Christ, Christ in you, the hope of glory, Christ formed in you. I and my Father will come to the one who loves me and guards my words, and we will make our home with him.

He's the one that loves me. Those who do not love me don't value my words, and the opposite fate ensues. The third aspect is the mystery of the church, and this is Ephesians chapter three, and this is one of the fullest explanations you will ever find.

Ephesians chapter three, starting in verse one, how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery. You have heard, let's just start at verse one, for this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus, for the sake of you Gentiles, how many places have we seen that? We saw it in Colossians, we've seen it in Galatians, we've seen it in Romans. I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus, for the sake of you Gentiles, surely you have heard about the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how that by revelation he made known to me the mystery.

As I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you will understand my

knowledge in the mystery of Christ. In other ages it was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and church-age prophets, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ through the gospel. Old Testament days, if you wanted to come to relationship, service, function, and knowledge of God, you came to Israel and you learned through the shadows, through the Levitical offerings, through the law of Moses, later on through the writings, the prophets.

But in these latter days, Hebrews 1, he has spoken to us by his Son, and the revelation of the fullness of the Son comes through the apostle Paul. This is the revelation made known to me, Paul says, the mystery, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men. Other ages.

Notice the Bible teaches, Paul expressly states, that there are ages, there are dispensations, you could say in other dispensations, but it's ages plural. In other ages it was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit, Spirit was not yet given because Christ was not yet glorified, now revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs. Why is it apostles plural, if Paul is the steward of this mystery? What happened at the Jerusalem Council? Paul testifies that the grace of God is coming to the Gentiles, and Peter affirms it.

Peter gets a vision. Paul has already started preaching, Paul has already been given his commission. And the Jerusalem Council, what should we do these Gentiles who are coming to the face? Should they be taught to observe the law? Remember that? And in the mouth of two or three witnesses, the thing is established.

Paul comes and makes his case, and Peter says, men and brethren, here's the vision I saw, what God has declared clean, let no man call common, and we are now being saved the way God is saving the Gentiles. Remember that reversal we saw last time? So interesting. So this is the mystery, that the Gentiles will be fellow heirs of the same body.

This is not of the same nation, of the same kindred, of the same set of tribes. This is something new. This is a new entity.

It is a new body. This is body of Christ. This is the mystery of the church.

The church is the body of Christ. The church is not Israel. There is a widespread mashing together and mangling of ages where Christians today want to believe that God's plan for Israel has just been expanded to include the Gentiles, and now Israel is the church, and the church is Israel, and it's all one thing, and there's only one return of Jesus, because he's just coming back for one people, and it just kind of changed who can join the club, but it's the same club.

Scripture says no. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. In Christ, it's new.

It doesn't say if any man be in Christ, he's joined Israel. If any man be in Christ, he's going to get assigned to a tribe. If any man be in Christ, he's going to come under the law, because Christ came and fulfilled the law.

You just can't believe how this gets distorted, and it is another gospel, and those who fall victim to it, who believe it, who attempt to practice it, fall under a curse. It's just tragic. Look at this.

It wasn't made known in other ages, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles. The other apostles are now on board. Peter says, you know, Paul's got a lot of things to say that are hard to understand, and people are twisting and resting this to their own destruction.

They're trying to change Paul's gospel, and they're getting destroyed, because they come under that curse. And what is the content of this gospel, this mystery? The Gentiles are co-heirs. They're of a peace in the body, and partakers of His promise, not His promise to Israel, not the Old Testament covenant, partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, the gospel of Christ, the Incarnation, the death, the burial, the resurrection, the ascension, the glory, the opportunity for the presence of Christ, the presence of the Father, the presence of the Holy Spirit within an individual.

No Old Testament covenant promise offered that possibility. At most, there was the endowment, the overshadowing of the Spirit for judges and kings and prophets, rare individuals who could receive the Spirit by request. Partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel were still in Ephesians 3, coming up on verse 7, of which I became a minister.

I, Paul, became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effectual working of His power, the effective working of His power. It's the power of God working in and through Paul. It is the Word of God, the plan of God, the purpose of God, the gospel of the mystery of God's plan and purpose to give to His victorious Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, His own people, uniquely connected to Christ as no other human beings in history ever would or could be.

Those who come to faith in this age are in Christ, and Christ is potentially in us. It's unique. It's a mystery heretofore unrevealed.

Verse 8, Ephesians 3, To me, who am less than the least of all saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. I, Paul, preach this unique revelation, this mystery, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery. Let's just stop right there.

What do you suppose that is, the fellowship of the mystery? Think about being brothers and sisters in Christ, being family, royal family. He is the firstborn among many brethren,

brethren talking about all men and all women who are in the church. Jesus Christ is the firstborn in that group.

He's not the firstborn in Israel. He's the firstborn, and He is the head of all things to the church. It is a unique fellowship.

We look at each other, and you know this to be true. Even here in our small fellowship, we look at each other as brothers and as sisters. We are family.

We are closely related. Do you think Israelites looked at each other beyond their immediate family and clan and said, here's somebody over in the tribe of Naphtali. He's my brother.

She's my sister. There was division and separation and looking askance. People looked, you know, I've got my immediate family and at most my clan, my cousins, my ancestors, my descendants.

We're a little group, but it was physical birth that united them. We are united in Christ by spiritual birth. We are born again to a living hope by the resurrection from the dead.

It is all unique. It is all new. It is in Christ, and the one who explains it, the one entrusted with the good news of this wonderful circumstance and opportunity for us, this unique calling, this wonderful status, these blessings in Christ, the messenger of that good news is Paul and nobody but Paul.

Even Peter and John, to the extent that they touch on these things, they are talking about them post-conversation with Paul. To me, who am the less than least of all saints, this grace was given that I should among the Gentiles, in particular to the Gentiles. Remember, Peter writes his letter to the scattered Jews, the Diaspora, to make all see what is the fellowship of this heretofore unrevealed situation of the mystery.

From the beginning of the ages, plural, the beginning of the dispensations, the beginning of the ages, has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ, to the intent that now, now, the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church, not by Israel, not by including new people into the Israel club, the manifold, the exponentially great, the multiplied wisdom of God might be made known by the church to principalities and powers in the heavenlies, according to the eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus. It is not a purpose he accomplished in Israel, it is not a purpose he accomplished under the law. He accomplished it in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom, being in Christ, we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

This is Hebrews chapter 3. This is Hebrews chapter 10. We have boldness to enter through the torn veil to find mercy and grace to help in time of need. We have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

Nothing like this before Pentecost. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you which is what? Glory. Your glory.

Glory associated with the gospel of the mystery in Jesus Christ. It all leads to glory. And you just want to say, hallelujah.

God has destined us for glory in Christ. We share so many wonderful things and we enter into, share and reflect the glory of Jesus Christ, uniquely so as His body, as the church. And Paul goes on.

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father. This is Ephesians 3.14. I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family and heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Remember the preceding facet? Here you have it in Ephesians 3. Christ dwell in your heart, indwelling of Jesus Christ, by faith, through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the sanctified ones, all of those who enter into their redemption and reconciliation and propitiation, who leverage the atonement accomplished by Jesus Christ, the propitiation for sin that He accomplished for everyone.

Comprehend with all the sanctified ones what is the width and length and depth and height, to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God, the indwelling of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Then you have the doxology in verse 20. To Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church.

When people say, why did God create man? For His glory. Well, this is how that happens. This is what makes it go.

This is the substance and the material, the way in which God's glory is revealed. To Him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

So this is the mystery of the church, part A, Ephesians 3, 1 through 10. The essence of it, you have two parts of the mystery revealed here. One is that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body.

When God makes this new creation, body of Christ, it's not limited to Israel. It's a new thing. If you're in Christ, you're a new creation.

And anybody who hears the gospel and responds, enters. We respond and we are elect. We respond and we are chosen.

We respond and we are in Him. We respond and we receive all of the benefits that are

conferred by God's grace through Christ. Point B, under the mystery of the church, Romans 1.16. We just saw it a bit earlier.

I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It is the power of God with a view towards salvation for everyone who believes. Here's the part of 1.16 that applies to the Jew first and also to the Greek, to the Gentile.

There is no longer a limitation of being Jewish or a proselyte to Israel, being a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or coming in by marriage or coming in by faith and joining yourself to Israel. To the Jew first and also to the Greek. It is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, says Romans 1.17. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.

The righteousness of God, the power of God was revealed in other ways in the Old Testament. Faith is always an element. Without faith, it's impossible to please Him.

But the righteousness of God, the opportunity for individual personal righteousness, vindication, justification, is revealed from faith to faith. As it is written, the just shall live by faith. We walk by faith and not by sight.

Faith is the means. Hope is the motivation. Love is the manifestation of the presence of God, the power of God, our salvation in Christ.

That's part B, Romans 1.16 and 17. Part C, Romans 2. And you, oh man, pointing your finger at others and you don't realize there are three fingers pointing back at you, you're doing the very same thing as these who suppress the truth and unrighteousness. Last half of Romans 1, verse 16, Romans 2.16, in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

God is going to judge the secrets of men by the secrets of God, by the mystery that was hidden in God until this age. God will judge the secrets of men, what they have tried to hide, the innermost thoughts and intents, their real attitude toward the gospel of the grace of God in Christ. God will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

And this is a part of Paul's gospel. Not only is there salvation, not only is there the Savior, not only is there the possibility of Him dwelling in us, and in the mystery of the church, Christ dwelling in us and we dwelling in Him and receiving the benefits that God confers on Him. I in them and they in me as Jesus prays to the Father.

This is point two and point three. The indwelling of Christ and we dwelling in Christ as church, as His body. But there is also judgment.

It's not just good news with no downside, no dark side, no negative side. God is going to judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. My news is not just that there's salvation, grace, benefit, blessing, opportunity, reward, indwelling, filling, gifting,

all of these things in Christ and in the Spirit.

But God is going to judge by Christ Jesus. And that is also a part of my gospel, Paul says. Judgment.

It isn't everybody will be happy over there. And let me tell you, the progressive people have absolutely eliminated from consideration any possibility of judgment by God. Paul says, it's my gospel.

Romans 16, this is point D under the mystery of the church. A, Ephesians 3, 1 through 10. B, Romans 1, 16 and 17.

C, Romans 2. This is talking about circumcision of the heart. God is going to judge whether or not you have genuinely come to Him in faith by Christ Jesus. If you don't accept the Son and the full revelation of the Son, you are uncircumcised of heart.

He's talking about the conscience that the Gentiles have. And they don't have to be circumcised under the law. What is the response of their conscience that either accuses or excuses them? In the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus according to my gospel.

What did you do in your heart? What did you decide in your heart? How did you respond in your heart? Did you suppress the truth in unrighteousness or did you accept it and pursue it and enter into it? Judgment is coming. Point D, Romans 16, 25 through 27. This is the doxology.

Now unto him who is able to establish you according to my gospel. Part of Paul's gospel, his message, his revelation of the mystery is that God is able to establish us. He's not establishing the nation of Israel.

He's not establishing Judah and Israel, Judah and Ephraim. God can establish you individually according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ. Again, this is Romans 16, 25 through 27.

Now unto him who is able to establish you according to my gospel, not the gospel, my gospel, Paul says, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret since the world began. This is new. Now made manifest and by the prophetic writings, the prophetic scriptures made known to all nations according to the commandment of the everlasting God with a view toward the obedience to the faith.

This is the purpose. All nations are now called to obedience of faith, obey the gospel, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, Paul says to the Philippian Gentile Roman citizen, jailer, and his family. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is able to establish you according to my gospel. He is able to establish you according to the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was never revealed before since the world began, kept secret, but now made manifest and by the prophetic scriptures, I keep saying prophetic, by the prophetic scriptures made known to everyone, to all nations, to all the ethnoi, all ethnicities, not limited to Israel, not limited to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants, according to the commandment of the everlasting God. God has commanded this.

This is God's plan and purpose. This is God's new age. The goal is obedience to the faith.

God alone wise, to Him be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen. Romans 16, 25-27.

That is the mystery of the church, us in Christ, in Him. The whole first chapter of Ephesians talks about it. The rest of these go more quickly.

The big ones are the first three. Those took the time. The fourth aspect of the mystery.

This is the mystery of the blindness of Israel, revealed in Romans 11, 25 and 26. The 11th chapter of the book of Romans, particularly verses 25 and 26. I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, Paul says.

You need to know this. It's a mystery. Not before anticipated.

If you're ignorant of this, listen to this. Think about what's going on in the world today. I encourage you to go out and listen to what's being said in the Christian world.

I desire, brethren, that you should not be ignorant of this mystery. Otherwise, you will be wise in your own conceits. If you don't understand this mystery, you're going to think you're smart and you're not.

You're going to have a conceit, a fiction in your mind. You're going to have another gospel. You're going to fall under the curse.

If you don't understand this aspect of the mystery, the gospel of the mystery, I want you to know this, brethren. Don't be ignorant of it. Otherwise, you will be wise in your own conceits.

It's a weird thing that if you don't understand the blindness of Israel, it's going to mess you up in your personal walk with Christ. Blindness, in part, has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles should come in. Blindness has happened in part to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles come in.

Notice the Gentiles are not coming into Israel because blindness has happened to Israel. Gentiles are coming in, but they're coming into something else. Israel is set aside.

Israel has been stricken in part with blindness. Why is it in part? Because there are

people in Israel who are jumping the fence into the church where there is neither Jew nor Greek. But the rest of Israel is blind until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in.

When that day comes, all Israel shall be saved. God will return and pick up and resume His program with Israel after the fullness of the Gentiles comes in to the church, the body of Christ. Which He has spoken about at length throughout Romans.

And now we're down to Romans 16. So He doesn't have to go back and talk about the difference between law and grace and the setting aside and all of these things that were earlier in Romans. And Romans 9, 10, and 11 about Paul's grief and his wishing that he could take his name out of the book for the sake of brethren in Israel to whom belong the stewardship of the covenant promises and so on.

Blindness has happened in part to Israel, and if you don't understand it, you are in danger of being wise in your own conceits until the fullness of the Gentiles come in. If you get hung up on Old Testament, if you get hung up on Sermon on the Mount that is given only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, if you get hung up on the call to repent because the kingdom is at hand, the kingdom promised to Israel, you're going to be wise in your conceits and you're going to miss it. Blindness has happened to Israel.

They've been set aside until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. Where do they come in? To the body, to the church, to this new creation. You have to understand it or you're going to be blind as Israel is.

You'll be wise in a conceit. You'll have a mastery of an argument and a point of view and an interpretation of scripture that is self-deceiving and deceives others. So important.

Mystery of the blindness of Israel. There is going to come a day when all Israel will be saved, and that is when God finishes His program in the church, takes them out of the way, and the final seven years of the age of Israel happens. And those who are truly Israel in Isaac shall thy seed be called, that's in Romans, that Israel is going to be delivered.

That Israel is going to be saved. And by saved, their covenant promises will be fulfilled. The land promise, the light to the Gentiles promise, the king on the throne promise, the Davidic covenant, the Palestinian covenant, the Abrahamic covenant, all of those promises will be fulfilled.

That is their salvation. That's number four. Number five, the mystery of the translation of the church.

You remember this in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 50 through 58. We call it the rapture. Now this I say, brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither does corruption inherit incorruption.

But I reveal to you a mystery. I shew you a mystery in the King James. Remember that? S-H-E-W.

I shew you a mystery, mystery unrevealed, given to Paul. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. 1 Corinthians 15, 50 through 52.

And of course you have Thessalonians as well. Number six, the mystery of iniquity. The mystery of iniquity.

There is a new movement of Satan. There is a new concentration and perpetration of evil that is unlike what took place in Old Testament days. There were peepers and mutterers and soothsayers and necromancers in Old Testament days.

There were demons and demon possession in the Old Testament days in which Jesus lived, in which He was incarnate and taught His disciples and anticipated the cross. There was demon possession. It extended into the early generations of the church.

That was a kind of opposition. That was a kind of program that Satan was mounting to dominate and to rule the kingdoms of the world that had been given to him and that he offered to Jesus Christ. But the mystery of iniquity is in 2 Thessalonians 2 verses 1 through 9. We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him, our gathering, us, body of Christ.

He doesn't say by the resurrection of the dead of all ages. Our gathering to Him is unique. It is separate.

It is different than the resurrection that Daniel talks about in 12, 1 and 2. Many will hear the voice and will rise out of the dust. Pictured in Ezekiel, the bones covered in flesh, sinew and skin and they stand on their feet. Old Testament Israel's resurrection is different.

Paul says, I implore you, I beseech you, I plead with you by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. When people say, by all that is holy, I swear by heaven, I swear by God. Paul says, I plead with you by the Lord Jesus Christ's coming.

The hope without which we are still in our sins. 1 Corinthians 15. If the dead are not raised, Christ is not raised.

The coming of the Lord Jesus and our gathering together unto Him, that you be not soon shaken or troubled. Let no man deceive you. The day will not come.

They are troubling you saying that the day of the Lord has already come. That day will not come. The day of the Lord, the day of judgment, the day of the revelation of the man

of sin, that day will not come except there first comes the apostasia, the standing away.

Nobody but us, it seems, anymore understands apostasia as standing away. It's so interesting because I was doing some work on another verse that uses peristasia. Appah is away from, peri is around.

And Paul says, shun profane and old wives tales. We'll get to it in Timothy. The word shun is peristasia.

And it means to be a bystander. It doesn't say reject. It doesn't say flee.

It says peristasia, stand apart from, stand. You need to be aware of these fables and these old wives tales and these profane babblings, these weird, you need to be aware. He says, stand in the periphery.

In the gospels, it talks about those who were standing by when the Lord Jesus was teaching. You need to be within earshot, but apart, peri, in the circle at a safe distance, just outside the bursting radius of God's judgment, peristasia. Well, apostasia is get clear away.

And there is going to come a complete separation, a standing apart from. If you're talking about doctrine and you stand apart from sound doctrine, that's what we call apostasy. And people want to read that into this.

But if you read this chapter carefully, nothing makes sense except the rapture. Paul says, don't be shaken in mind or troubled. Let no one deceive you.

The day of the Lord of judgment and the trumpets and seals and bowls and so on that will be revealed later by John. That day will not come except there first comes the standing away and the man of sin is revealed. These are actually perfects.

That day will not come except there first having come the standing away and having come the revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition. The day won't come until the standing away and the revelation of the man of sin. Then the day will come.

Man of sin will be revealed. Then the day of the Lord will come. But it's kind of like each in his own order talking about the resurrection.

The order is the apostasia. And it doesn't say except there comes a great apostasy or unless there comes the great rebellion or the great departure from the faith, it says the apostasia. Paul knows that they recognize this from his teaching when he was present with them.

And he the standing away. Remember the rapture I taught you, 1 Corinthians 15, our gathering together to him and so on. And this is what he says, I am beseeching you by the coming of the Lord and our gathering to him by the rapture.

He introduces this with a reference to the rapture. And once the standing away happens, once the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. He makes himself into a Trinity.

He, as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 2 Thessalonians 2, 1-4. Remember, I told you these things.

Do you remember? We've already gone over this. That's why he refers to the rapture in such a simple term. Remember the standing away I told you about? Remember I told you these things? Now you know what withholds, what restrains that the man of sin might be revealed in his time.

For the mystery of iniquity is already at work. There's already a new program of evil. There is already a deception.

There's already the perpetration of lie. There is already the vindication and justification and promotion of sin as virtue, of evil as morality. Don't let your good be spoken of as evil.

That's the agenda that is the mystery of iniquity. It's a new program Satan is perpetrating. And people who suppress the truth of God in unrighteousness are going to believe the lie.

They're going to love and practice the lie. That is the mystery of iniquity that is already at work. But it's in a hidden form.

It is going to be revealed after the standing away and after the man of sin is revealed. And he is going to set himself up. He's going to fulfill the five I wills that Satan spoke.

I will be like the most high. I will ascend my throne above the stars of God. I will sit in the temple of God demonstrating that I am God.

And I think he'll do it through technology. I think he'll do it through absolute command and control. Nobody can do anything.

Nobody can buy and sell. Nobody can make a move. Nobody can do anything that's not seen and tracked and observed.

Satellites, drones, electronic control of banking and commerce and purchases and activities. Where are you? Everybody's got a GPS. They know where you are and what you're doing at all times.

Eye in the sky. Big brother. Now you know what withholds that he might be revealed in his time.

The mystery of iniquity is already at work. But he who now restrains that which now restrains will continue to restrain until it is taken out of the way. And that is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in us.

That is the indwelling Christ. That concept. Christ in us, the hope of glory, the Holy Spirit present in the body of Christ.

The Spirit doesn't have a body of his own. So how does he operate? He indwells the body of Christ. The physical body of Christ, the incarnate body of Christ was led, guided, and empowered and enabled by the Spirit of God.

Us as body of Christ, we are enabled and empowered, inhabited, indwelt by the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ. When the body leaves and the Spirit leaves with it, that which inhibits is taken out of the way. Then the man of sin is going to be revealed.

Then the day of the Lord will come. Do you not remember when I was with you, I told you these things. I plead with you by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him, the apostasia, that you don't be troubled and shaken in mind.

And that you don't be wise in your own conceits. You're going to construe it a different way. That is point six, the mystery of iniquity.

Point seven is the mystery of the body of Christ, the church. We have already covered this. And you see these overlap.

They are a unity. It's like a Venn diagram. There are parts of each of these aspects that overlap.

The mystery of the body of Christ, the church, Ephesians 5, 22-32, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church, his body. The church is the body of Christ, of which he is the savior.

Just as the church submits to Christ, so wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. Did Jesus come as the Messiah to Israel? Did he come to atone for the sins of Israel? Yes, but a different and mystery aspect of the coming of Christ, his incarnation and his work on the cross, is that Christ loved the church.

God revealed to the Lord Jesus that upon completion of his work on the cross, he would be given his own peculiar people, zealous of good works, his body, not limited to Jews, not the nation of Israel, not the Old Testament believers, a unique and special gift noted as the bride of Christ, the body of Christ. As Adam and Eve, the two became one flesh, Christ and the church, the two are one. He is the head of the body.

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it, Ephesians 5.26, to sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a glorious church. Israel is not in here, Israel is not in view. Christ loved the church, gave himself up for her, to sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.

The one who has my words and keeps them, he is the one who loves me. We will come and indwell, make our home. And to present her to himself as a glorious church, the glory of the gospel of Christ.

Glory, glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, any such blemish, holy and blameless, holy and blameless. Cleansing from sin, uniquely through the blood of Jesus Christ, not the blood of goats and bulls, not the Levitical system. Read Hebrews, which I think Paul wrote.

The whole book of Hebrews is a revelation of the mystery, founding it on Old Testament truth. There are more Old Testament quotes in Hebrew than anywhere else in Scripture. And it is the appeal to the Jews to enter into this body where there is neither Jew nor Greek.

It's anticipated, the foundation is laid in the Old Testament. And Paul's appeal to his fellow countrymen, his fellow Jews, his fellow Hebrews, is this is part and parcel, this flows out of God's revelation in the Old Testament, but it is new. Body of Christ, the church.

In the same way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies, he who loves his wife loves himself. No one ever hated his own body. He nourishes it and cherishes it.

This puts away this submit to me or I'll beat you senseless notion that men have curiously gotten out of this passage. No one hates his body. He nourishes it, cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.

Christ loves us. He works on our behalf. He has sacrificed himself for us and he continues to intercede and to represent and to act on our behalf.

Christ does the church for we are members of his body. Verse 31, For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife. The two will become one flesh.

This mystery is profound. The mystery that is represented in marriage, the relationship of a husband and wife, there is an unrevealed aspect of this. It's stated in the Old Testament, they two shall be one flesh, but it goes beyond one flesh.

It goes into a reciprocal, beneficial, and glorious relationship. This mystery is profound, but I'm speaking about Christ and the church. Human marriage, man and woman, is just a shadow.

And we often fail in our shadows. The Levitical system often broke down, done incorrectly, done improperly, laid aside, done for the wrong reasons. The same is true in marriage between a man and a woman.

But the mystery, it's designed to represent. It is designed to anticipate. It is designed to be a window into understanding this great mystery of Christ and his body, the church.

That's the seventh great mystery. What a privilege to live in this age, to be party to these revelations, to enter into these truths, to be body of Christ, to have these wonderful blessings in him, to look forward to his return, to receive the pleading ministry of Paul, to enter into these truths by the coming of Jesus Christ and our gathering unto him, to not be shaken in mind and not troubled, not worried about the mystery of iniquity, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. That's not an Old Testament verse.

Greater is he that is in you, among you, indwelling, filling, sealing, gifting, present in and through the Spirit, present in and through the Word, present in his own unique Christological presence, God the Father coming and making his home with us. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. And so long as we are in the world, the man of sin can't be revealed, because we are the temple of God.

We embody his presence. When we leave, he leaves, and literally all hell breaks loose. What a comfort, what an encouragement, what a privilege, and what an opportunity for us to remember these unique gifts.

There were wonderful, unique opportunities granted to Israel in the Old Testament age. Look at the unique opportunities that we as church have in this age. What a privilege, what a glorious gospel revealed by the Apostle Paul.

Father, thank you for the truth of your Word. Thank you for how clearly you have communicated to us our opportunities, our calling, our election. We pray that as the Holy Spirit impresses these truths on our hearts, we will see the practical application, the outworking in our thoughts, in our evaluations, pursuing our goals, observing our priorities, reflecting our values in our daily walk before you, that we will identify and eradicate sin in our lives, receive the cleansing grace offered to us through the blood of Jesus Christ.

In so doing, that we will be fit and able representatives, that we will be workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.