

1Tim 24-04-14a

Good morning. Welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. We're continuing this morning, our study on the, uh, gospel according to Paul and the seven elements of mystery, things that were heretofore unrevealed.

Uh, they are in many cases, uh, anticipated in sort of a general fashion. They are affirmed and, uh, testified to by later writings, such as John in his epistles, but Paul is the trustee. He is the one to whom the Lord Jesus revealed these seven things.

They are uniquely explained and detailed for us by Paul, which, uh, is a caution to those who want to take parts of the new Testament and say, Paul did not write that I'm not going to pay attention to it. You miss out on divinely revealed truth that has great importance and application for us. We are looking at each of those in sequence.

We began with number one, the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, which encompasses his birth, his ministry, his death, burial, resurrection, his ascension, and session, his seating at the right hand of the father. We have gone to number two, which is the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ with its ramifications. And we've come to number three, which is the mystery of the church, his body, a new people comprised of both Gentiles and Jews, a completely new method of incorporation, which is the baptism and sealing of the Holy Spirit rather than coming to the nation of Israel and being a proselyte to those who worship the God of Israel and maintain his presence in their tabernacle or temple.

There's no Holy Spirit ministry to make one an Israelite, but there is nothing but the ministry of the Spirit to enter us into union with Christ. So this is our third point. We're going to resume it this morning and it is going to entail a bit of review on the three areas of love, the spheres of love that are so important to understand as we look at all three of these mystery truths.

What is it to represent the Lord Jesus now as his body, as his incarnation, number one, what characterizes those who are indwelt by the Lord Jesus Christ, who share his attitudes and his policies toward others, and how do we function in the church toward each other? So let's ask God's blessing on our fellowship and study and we'll begin. Father, what a privilege it is to come before your presence, to enter, as it were, where only the high priest in the Old Testament could be present in the Holy of Holies, your throne room, to represent ourselves in the name of our high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, to make our requests known, to find mercy and grace to help in time of need. We are aware of what a tremendous opportunity it is to represent ourselves before you in the power of the Spirit in the name of the Lord Jesus, our Savior.

And we ask this morning in that light that you will bless us as we look at your word together, that the Holy Spirit will find us ready pupils and can impress these truths on

our hearts in a way that results in application and a closer conformity to the example of the Lord Jesus, that we can present ourselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable in your sight, and that we can in all ways more fully reflect the glory that you gave to your Son, the Lord Jesus, and into which we enter by faith and treasuring these words from the scriptures. We pray all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

So we began in our Timothy study, 1 Timothy chapter 3, looking at this idea of mystery. Paul says, great is the mystery of godliness, and it really is a great mystery. He encompasses in that statement, all of these revelations that are uniquely given to him, not to Peter, not to John.

The Lord Jesus himself begins to unfold these truths in the upper room, beginning halfway through John chapter 13, extending into chapters 14 through 16, reflecting them in his high priestly prayer in John 17. But to understand those truths requires the explanation and the revelation that comes to us through Paul. So in that light, we have been looking at these truths and Jesus said, if you have my words and keep them, he that has my words and tereo, guards or treasures them, considers them extremely important, a high priority, he it is that loves me.

I and my Father will come to him and make our home with him. This is our second mystery, the indwelling of Christ. There's nothing about the indwelling of God in individual believers anywhere in the Old Testament, the closest you can get is when God promises Judah and Israel that he will pour out his spirit on all flesh, and this is a millennial promise.

But the indwelling of Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Father is something that Jesus mentions in the upper room and Paul elaborates and explains how it is we obtain it. And from this, we have been looking at the words of the Lord Jesus and the sphere in which these commands can be fulfilled. And that took us to the one another's, the one another commands.

We've got close to 60 of these, depending on how you count them and whether you count a repetition in the same verse or in a subsequent verse as one, two, or three. You get to John 13 and Jesus says it three times. But there has been some inattention with regard to the fulfilling of these one another commands because we haven't perhaps spent enough time thinking about who one another is.

You think about Jesus talking to the Pharisees and he says, the law is summed up in love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and love your neighbor as yourself. And one of the Pharisees speaks up being wise and he says, well, who is my neighbor? And it's a great question. And this causes Jesus to give the parable of the good Samaritan.

And after the self-righteous types pass on the other side of the road, the Samaritan

comes along and meets the needs of this individual that he personally encounters in his path. And concluding the story, Jesus says, who was neighbor to the man? And they are forced to acknowledge it was the Samaritan. And it's a great question.

Who is my neighbor? A like question is who is one another? Because only certain people can be my neighbor. I need to have personal contact with them for them to be a neighbor. The standard for neighbor love is love your neighbor as yourself.

Put another way, the golden rule, do unto others as you would have others do unto you. This is respect, consideration to the extent that it is possible as we have opportunity, do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. And even there, Paul makes a distinction between all and those who are of the household of faith.

And we look especially for those opportunities. But who is one another? By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another. A new commandment I give to you.

This is John 13, 34, the first of our five dozen one another's. John 13, a new commandment. Now he has already reviewed what the law provides.

The law gives us the knowledge of sin. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. And the law is fulfilled in neighbor love, treating others as we would like to be treated.

The higher and new commandment is love one another as I have loved you. It is a new target group and it is a new standard. Jesus could easily have said a new commandment.

I give you that you love your neighbor or that you love the world as I have loved you. But he specifically says one another. And one another intrinsically requires reciprocal action, reciprocal attitude.

Both ends of a one another transaction have to be of the same mind, have to have the unity, the spirit and the bond of peace. So love one another, love one another. And as you go through these in the gospel of John, in Romans and Thessalonians, in first John and second John, in first Peter, first Peter 3, 8, love one another deeply from the heart.

First Peter 4, 8, love each other deeply. Romans 12, 10, be devoted to one another in brotherly love. We recognize this truth in our circumstances.

Our families receive much more attention, consideration, benefit. We put ourselves out in family love. Much more so than someone down the street or someone that we've heard about or someone that we are acquainted with, but they are really a neighbor.

They can be in our path. And if we have opportunity to do good to them, we certainly should. But you think about the difference.

And one of the reasons we can exercise family love so effectively is we have so much

more knowledge. We have so much more contact. We are able to love intelligently.

It's one thing to buy a gift for somebody at the office, you know, that draw names and your secret Santa or whoever, and you don't know who's going to get the gift. And so you try to get something that's sort of bland and universal that anybody can use. Get them a Vegemetic or a, you know, car deodorizer or something.

But you don't have the knowledge. When you know someone and you love someone, you know what they like and what they don't like. You know what will please them and what will give joy to their heart, what they won't be, you know, regifting next Christmas.

And it is based on knowledge and on intimacy and on unity. And we can have a much more effective and a much greater blessing in the area of this family love. This is what one another love is.

So you have the Lord Jesus after. And by the way, the love each other, love one another, love each other deeply, be devoted to one another, make your love increase and overflow for each other. Paul says in First Thessalonians 3, 12, greet one another with a holy kiss.

I don't just pass my neighbor as I'm walking the dog and greet them with a holy kiss. This is going to be considered strange and dangerous. Law enforcement may appear shortly.

If I start, you know, there used to be a song called Love Potion Number Nine. And the guy drinks this stuff that somebody stares up for him. And he says, when I kissed the cop at 34th and Vine, he broke my little bottle of love potion number nine.

So there is a sphere. There is an area where this love is to be expressed. There is protection.

Their intimate relationships need the protection and the mutuality that lets us be relaxed to confide to, they used to say, let your hair down, but to have the protection of that love. And one of the problems with trying to express one another love outside the family is that it is abused and misused, and it becomes the fodder for gossip and for maligning and for things getting out and that are harmful and detrimental and don't reflect the glory of Jesus Christ in the body. And the lack of Holy Spirit presence at both ends of the one another commands can create great disruption.

So we need to pay attention to who one another is. So Jesus addresses this, and we've gone through the list of all 59 or 60 of these one another commands. Most of them are positive.

They are consider others better than yourself. Honor one another above yourself. Serve one another.

Be at peace with one another. Live in harmony with one another. Use whatever gift you have received to serve others.

And this one another love is generally in the body. These gifts are for the edification of the body. Teach one another.

Instruct one another. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Admonish one another.

Encourage one another. Build each other up. We've looked at each of these and seen where they are in scripture.

Be patient, bearing with one another in love. This is Ephesians 4. Be kind and compassionate to one another. Carry each other's burdens.

Wash one another's feet. This is forgiveness of personal sin. Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another, Colossians 3.13. Forgiving each other, Ephesians 4.32. Accept one another as Christ accepted you.

And once again, we have a sphere where this acceptance and this arena is, who did Christ accept and who did he not accept? He was not the unconditional friend of sinners, but Jesus was the friend of repentant sinners. Any Pharisee that invited him to dinner, he would go. And we have Simon the Pharisee inviting Jesus to his house.

And he's a doubter and he doesn't accord Jesus the honor that is due a guest. And so the woman comes in and washes Jesus' feet with her tears and dries them with her hair. And Jesus gently rebukes Simon.

He says, you're looking down on this woman, but she is according me honor that you did not. But Jesus would accept an invitation. He would talk to Pharisees who came up and asked him questions, but he didn't go down to the Sanhedrin and picket or break in and demonstrate and yell at them as they were making decisions.

When they came to him, he was willing to speak the truth. And we also have to watch for what can cause one another, cause a brother to stumble. And so in 1 Corinthians 8, if I do something, if I eat a kind of food, if I have a practice in my life that causes my brother to stumble, I will never do that again so that I will not scandalize him, not cause him to stumble, scandalize.

But we have the idea that love is designed to go everywhere and be ubiquitous and try to unify everyone. Jesus himself anticipated that there is an inevitable distinction and separation and division among people. Luke 12 49 and following, Jesus says, I came to send fire on the earth.

How I wish it were already kindled. I have a baptism to be baptized with and how

distressed I am till it is accomplished. Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? At Christmas time, peace on earth toward men of goodwill.

But notice it is not peace on earth for everyone. It is peace toward men of goodwill. And Jesus says, do you suppose I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division.

Now, is there supposed to be division in the body of Christ? You've got the whole several chapters of 1 Corinthians addressing the harm and the hazard and the detriment that division causes in the body. But the body is divided from the rest of the world. Division, from now on, five in one house will be divided, three against two, and two against three.

Father will be divided against son, son against father, mother against daughter, and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law. The Lord Jesus Christ and response to Him or reaction against Him creates division, and there is separation. And Jesus said, I came to bring division.

I came to polarize. I came to out those who want a relationship with the Father and those who do not. And we have a different policy for people in different parts of that group.

This is why Jesus says, and sometimes it's a very difficult thing to see some of the words of the Lord Jesus, but in this light, they make more sense. In Matthew 10, 37, he who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. He who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And when it comes to which side are you on, are you the two or are you the three in the household? Are you going to respect the fact that the issue of the Lord Jesus creates division and therefore separation? When Jesus' own mother and brothers came to see Him, and this is in three of the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke all give this conversation. They come to Him and say, your mother and brothers are outside. And Jesus said, whoever does the will of my father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.

Those who do the will of my father, this is now the standard of family. This is the arena of family love. And at that point, it appears that Jesus' brothers were not in the camp and of the fold.

And Jesus said, they are not my brothers and sisters. And He gestured to those who were there listening to His words. He said, these, and He pointed to His disciples, these are my mother and brothers and sisters.

A new standard. Jesus said in Matthew 19, 29, everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my name's sake will be rewarded a hundredfold and inherit eternal life. It's not the same as salvation.

Inheritance is blessing, opportunity, reward, entering into God's work and God's glory in the kingdoms to come. What is that inheritance based on? It isn't automatic with faith. It is based on recognizing that there is an inevitable need for pursuing that which is good and separating from that which is evil.

Jesus said in Luke 12, 53, father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter, daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and so on. And in Luke 14, He says, if anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And we say, really? I thought the law said honor your father and mother.

What is Jesus talking about in the context of Luke chapters 12 through 14? This is priorities and it comes to making a choice. When we have godly family, it's a double blessing because they are our brothers and sisters and parents and offspring, both physically and spiritually. But when there is a division, when the division that Jesus said He came to bring calls out a distinction within normal human relationships, we have to respect the separation.

And Jesus says, if you can't do that, you can't be my disciple. You cannot be indiscriminate and undiscerning in the exercise of love. You will bring disaster.

It's a harsh truth. It's a hard thing. But this is why it's in scripture.

So forgiveness isn't necessarily aimed at the world. Forgiveness is aimed at the brother. Jesus said, my heavenly father will forgive you if each of you from his heart forgives his brother his trespasses.

And if you from your heart do not forgive your brother his trespasses, my heavenly father also will do to you. And this is within the family to have the humility and the good sense to forgive one another. So what are we to do? We come back to Paul now in Ephesians 4. We endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

The unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. You're not in the flesh, but in the spirit. If indeed the spirit of God dwells in you, if anyone does not have the spirit of God, he is not his.

This is what defines the family. This is what defines the one and others. This is why he can say in 1 Corinthians 1, I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Philippians 2, to fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord and one mind, the same love. What does it mean to have the same love? This is one another love. It goes in both directions.

It is protected. It is Holy Spirit empowered and enabled and guided. The love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit in Romans 5.5 is this love, that you have the same love, one accord, one mind.

And Paul says in Ephesians that the work of the spirit and the function of spiritual gifts is to function so that we come to the unity of faith, knowledge of the Son of God, to be a mature man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. One another love is inherent in that growth and in that mutual blessing. And then you come to Jesus praying to the Father in John 17, verse 21.

Jesus prays that they, his disciples, the ones that have been with him from the beginning, that they all may be one as you Father are in me and I in you, that they also may be one in us so that the world may believe that you sent me. One of the greatest testimonies to the world isn't Jesus saying, by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love them, or that you love the world, or that you love your neighbor. The testimony to the world, people will know that we are Jesus' disciples when we love one another.

So they will be one in us so that, this is John 17, verse 21, they will be one in us, they, the disciples, the brothers and sisters in Christ, they will be one in us so that the world may believe that you sent me. Our one another love is the greatest testimony to the world that Jesus is Lord and Savior. John 17, verse 22, and the glory which you gave me I have given them that they may be one just as we are one, I in them, you in me.

Notice, I in them. Remember the conditions for the indwelling of Jesus Christ? Is every believer indwelt with Jesus Christ? They are not. The one who has my words and keeps them, he's the one that loves me.

This would have to be salvation by works if it happens for every believer. But those who have his words and keep them, he it is that loves me. I and my Father will come to him and make our home with him.

We covered this last time. So this glory, I in them and you in me, that they may be made complete in one and that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them as you have loved me. The love that is in and among, from and to and on the disciples of the Lord Jesus is the testimony to the world.

John 17, 21 through 23. Not the only testimony, but a vital one. Remember when Paul believes that he will never see the Ephesians again and he invites the elders to come out to Miletus.

He sends to Ephesus and calls for the elders of the church. When they had come to him, this is Acts 20, starting at verse 17. Acts 20, 17 and following.

Paul is in Miletus. He sends to Ephesus, calls for the elders of the church. When they had

come to him, he said, You know from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, among the Ephesian believers.

Many tears and trials happened to me, the plotting of the Jews. I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you and taught you publicly and from house to house. Testifying to Jews and Greeks, what? What is the content of his message? Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Change of mind toward God, this is salvation and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem. I don't know what's going to happen.

The Holy Spirit testifies that change and tribulations await. None of these things move me. I don't count my life dear, so that I may finish my race with joy and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. So take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, to whom are the Ephesian elders exhorted to pay attention and to take heed, themselves and the flock, the one another's, the brothers and sisters in Christ who have received and placed their faith in the gospel, the testimony, the whole counsel of God. Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.

Shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. After my departure, savage wolves will come in among you. There are savage wolves on the outside.

They will come in among you, not sparing the flock and from among yourselves. Once we have a sensitivity to the difference in what is and is not the family, what is and is not one another, outside makes a lot more sense. Coming inside, getting into the fold, not sparing the flock.

They are wolves. Do not give what is holy to dogs, Jesus said. Do not cast your pearls before the hogs.

And it sounds very unkind, but these are people groups. And we have to not broadcast indiscriminately what is holy. And we don't take the pearls of truth that have been entrusted to us and try to throw them in front of swine.

What happens, Jesus said, they will turn and tear you to pieces because they have no capacity. They have no interest. They don't have that seeking heart or seeking note.

Shepherd the church of God from among yourselves. Men will rise up speaking perverse things. Our greatest danger comes from inside the fold.

Perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves. Therefore, be watchful. Remember, for three years, I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

Who is the everyone he is warning with tears? The flock, the Ephesian believers. Now, brethren, brethren, who is Paul going to commend? Brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace. That word is able to build you up and give you an inheritance.

Not your salvation, not the 36 things that happen at the point of faith in Christ. His word, I commend to you God and the word of his grace. That is able to build you up, to grow you, to mature you, and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

There are those who are sanctified and those who are not. Those who are sanctified receive an inheritance and they are built up. Those who are not sanctified, believers are not, don't receive these blessings.

Verse 35, I have shown you in every way by laboring, meeting my own needs, providing for my own necessities. In laboring like this, I have shown you in every way that you must support the weak. You must support the weak.

Who did Paul support by meeting his own needs? What resources were available in the church? The one another's in the fold. They didn't start a soup kitchen for any homeless person in Ephesus. This is within the flock.

Not to say that soup kitchens are not a good thing. It's just not in this passage. We have a whole separate set of commands and opportunities for those who are outside.

But for those who are inside, this is our priority. Do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. It would be kind of strange to have a soup kitchen for random homeless and there are people in your own church whose needs are not met.

I have shown you in every way by laboring like this that you must support the weak. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus when he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Interestingly, that's not in any of the gospels.

This is the importance of understanding the one another's. We have explicit guidance on what we do for brothers and sisters in Christ. We have wonderful guidance and wonderful opportunities for neighbors, but it's different guidance.

It's more general. It is less intimate. It is in the area of respect of doing to these that are at a distance what we would like those at a distance to do to us.

If we find their cow wandering, we bring it back and tie it to a post for them. But this is in a different realm. Neighbor love is the standard of this is what I would hope my neighbor would do for me.

I was on a run one day and I was going down the alley and all of this water was gushing

into the alley from the backyard of somebody that I did not know. But they were a few houses down from us and something had gone wrong with their pool system. Their pool was overflowing and gallons and gallons of water were overflowing.

And so I found a neighbor of the neighbor who knew where they were on vacation, and they were able to call somebody who could get into their house and turn the water off to the pool. That's neighbor love. If it's within possibility to the extent that it's up to you, as you have opportunity, do good to all.

This is far different than knowing them well enough to meet specific needs in the one another and then we have those who are outside. This is government. This is those who are opponents.

These are those that Jesus metaphorically refers to as not giving what is holy to or not casting pearls in front of the Pharisees who received the nine woes. So we have specific policies and it is so helpful because our love can be effective and our love will shine the light of the glory of God in a way that will draw those who are seeking and those who are receptive and those who recognize their need for relationship with God and we do not find ourselves exploited or misunderstood. We do not end up creating sin and patterns of sin.

We instead are able to have the Holy Spirit bless our efforts in love. So critically important. I have notes on each of these three areas that we've gone over in these last couple of weeks and I've organized them a little better, especially those who are outside.

Whether they are active opponents or not is an issue in Scripture. Whether there is a government authority involved. You think about the passage, what slaves are to do with regard to their masters, what masters are to do for their slaves.

This is not one another love. This is not neighbor love. This is more in the structure of society.

So there's a lot to cover there. But all of this informs us when it comes to understanding the church, which is His body. Everything is not the body of Christ and we have specific provisions, guidance, and opportunities and enablements with regard to the body.

So having said that, we'll take our break. When we come back, we're going to look at the conclusion of the third mystery and begin the fourth. Let's pause here and take our break.