

The Mystery Of The Ages

Ephesians 3:1-12

- 1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,
- 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:
- 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,
- 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)
- 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;
- 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:
- 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.
- 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;
- 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
- 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,
- 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:
- 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

How many of you like a good mystery?

Most of us are created with an intrigue to the unknown.

From the beginning of time, all creation has centered on God's ultimate purpose.

- **Plan Of The Ages**

- The answer to this mystery did not just evolve unplanned and unanticipated. It is not here by accident, but it is the masterpiece of God's divine plan.
- Predestined from the Beginning
 - Before God formed the universe and created mankind, He planned the whole course of time. With an ultimate goal, God decided what He would accomplish and how He would do it.
 - God thus predestinated this mystery according Romans 8 and Ephesians 1.
- No one, not even Satan and all of hell can destroy the answer to this mystery.
- There is a song that is sung that has it right about this mystery, "It's been thru the storm, but the wind couldn't turn it. It's been in the fire, but the fire couldn't burn it."
- When the stars fall from the sky, the heavens roll back as a scroll, and time is no more, this mystery of the ages will remain!

- Predestination in the Scriptures involves only this mystery, not individuals. Only those individuals who are a part of the mystery will enjoy predestination.

- **The Eternal Purpose**

- For centuries, this mystery was unknown. Even Satan could not figure out God's plan according to:
- 1 Corinthians 2:7-8 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
- Only the experience of receiving the Holy Ghost and the Spirit's revelation to the apostles have allowed us to see.
- Ephesians 3: 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
- God's goal was to create someone to inhabit eternity with Him, someone with whom He could share fellowship and love.

- He desired a bride, one who would sit on the throne and rule and reign with Him eternally.
- This is the ultimate goal of the whole creation. Believers have been predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the council of His own will.

Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

- **Household Of God**

- Numerous Scriptures compare the people of God to a house or temple of God.
- The Foundation
 - Any building, institution, family, or individual is only as good as the foundation upon which it rests. Jesus declared to Peter and the other disciples in Matt. 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build this mystery."
 - Thus the foundation of this mystery is the identity of Jesus Christ.
 - The scripture tells us that the mystery rests upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ is the Chief Cornerstone.

- I Corinthians 3:10-13 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

- What part of the mystery are believers? A door, window, a pillar? Each believer though varied and different, finds his place and fits together in harmony into one building, which is the mystery.
 - Ephesians 2:21 says we are a “building fitly framed together, “ which is growing into “an holy temple in the Lord.”
- We are indeed a part of the mystery according to Hebrews 3:6.
- Furthermore, Peter declared that we are “lively stones,” or living stones, “built up a spiritual house,” according to 1Peter 2:5.
 - Stones are different from bricks or blocks. The mason can build a wall of brick or block easily and swiftly because all the bricks are identical.

- However, raw stones are all different in shape and size. A stonemason must choose each stone individually, study it to see how and where it will fit in, and maybe even chip or shape it to fit. His work actually becomes a work of art.
- As individuals we are all different from each other with diverse talents, abilities, personalities, and opportunities.
- The scripture in I Corinthians 6:19 tells us that our bodies are the housing for this mystery.
- **Christ's Body**
 - This mystery is the body of Christ and “we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone.” Ephesians 5:30
 - Jesus Christ, the Head
 - 3 times in the Book of Ephesians, Paul reminded us that Christ is the head of the body, or the mystery.
 - Of course the head and the body are inseparably united.
 - Since any living creature with two heads is a freak, there can be only one head. This mystery does not need another head be it man or institution, for Jesus Christ leads, controls, and directs us as the Chief Shepherd of the flock.

- Ministers, pastors, and elders who oversee and rule the church are only under shepherds who lead under the mandate of, and point us to, our Chief Shepherd.
 - Furthermore, we should submit to Him, not only as our Savior, but also as our Lord and our head.

- **Unified Members Of The Body**

- It is a fact that God in Christ walked the earth in a body of flesh. Now that He has ascended to heaven, this mystery is His body in this world.
 - We are his hands and feet. Whatever the Lord would do on this earth today, He does it through this mystery.
 - He has commissioned us to go unto the whole world...
- But to do this we must remain unified. Whether we are a hand, a foot, an eye, an ear, or a nose, we all have our place and are all members of the mystery.
- You cannot survive alone separate from the body.
- Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.

- **The Family Of God**

- The mystery I am talking about today is a spiritual family and every congregation is a family. We are all children of God, an eternal family where our brothers and sisters in the Lord often become closer to us than natural flesh and blood.

- **Born And Adopted Into The Family**

- We become part of the family through the new birth of the water and the Spirit.
 - We cannot just join the family or even reform the old nature, but we must be born again as John 3:7 tells us.
 - How are we born of water and of Spirit? Acts 2:38
- What is the mystery and what is so great about it?

- Colossians 1:26-27 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:
27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:
- If Christ is in you then you become the temple of the Holy Ghost. So what is a temple? It is a church. What is the body of Christ according to:
 - Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,
23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.
- The final invitation in the Bible appears in:
 - Revelation 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
- Jesus Christ and His church want you to discover the purpose of life and know God's eternal purpose by getting a revelation of the mystery of the ages, the church.
- If you are looking for Jesus Christ, you will find Him by looking at His body, the church.
 - If you want to feel the love of Christ you will feel Him through His body the church. If you are looking for purpose you will find it in the body of Christ, the mystery of the ages, the church.