

- 3) The mystery of the gospel message is offered to everyone. God does not want anyone to perish. (1 Timothy 2:4)
"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:6) "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

b. This mystery must be shared with everyone.

- 1) Paul *preached* (i.e., proclaimed, announced) this gospel mystery. Christ left that duty with all of His followers. (Mark 16:15) *"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."* **Do you regularly seek opportunities to share the Gospel?**
- 2) The manner of this preaching is twofold.
 - a) Preaching must include *warning* or exhortation. It involves giving biblical counsel. It is helping others stay on the right track for the Lord. The same word is "*admonishing*" in Colossians 3:16 where it applies to the words of our songs. *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*
 - b) Preaching must include *teaching*. This is giving instruction. It is proclaiming doctrine.
- 3) Biblical preaching contains warning and teaching because the goal of preaching is to present Christians to Christ who are perfect (i.e., mature). There is a sense in which the preacher will present the hearer to the Lord one day.
- 4) It is the preacher's passion, goal and prayer to present you as mature Christians. Paul laboured (until tired) and strove (or struggled) to that end (v.29).

Conclusion: God's mystery was the fact that He would invite Gentiles to be saved and to become one with believing Jews. That mystery is no longer hidden. It is abundantly rich. God offers it to everyone. God has given to us the same salvation He offers to the Jews. Hallelujah!

If you know Christ as your Saviour, He lives in you. You have partaken in the mystery of the Gospel. You have a glorious future awaiting you in heaven because of that revealed mystery.

Song: My Saviour's Love 452

The Mystery

2 April 2023 PM – Col 1:24-28 – Col23 – Scott Childs

Introduction: In Colossians 1:24-25, Paul said that he rejoiced in his sufferings for the Colossi believers. This verse does not imply that Paul was suffering because Christ did not suffer enough for our sin. Christ alone paid for our entire sin debt. However, suffering did not end with Christ. Preaching the gospel to the Gentiles brought suffering to Paul and other preachers. All that suffering benefited the body of Christ. God gave him the dispensation or stewardship of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. His was to fulfil a part of the Word of God that had been a mystery. In other words, he was accomplishing God's plan.

Transition: This evening, I want to explain three facts about this Mystery that each of us need to understand.

The first fact that we need to understand is that ...

1. The Mystery is no longer a Hidden (v.26)

a. This mystery had been a hidden for centuries.

- 1) This mystery was the fact that God would invite Gentiles to be saved and to become one with believing Jews.
- 2) Thomas Constable writes, "That God would save Gentiles was no new revelation (e.g., Isa. 49:6), but that He would dwell in them and deal with them on the same basis as He did Jews was new revelation."
- 3) Way back in Genesis, we read that God would one day bless the Gentiles. (Genesis 12:3) *"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."*
- 4) Since creation, that blessing had been hidden.
 - a) The mystery had been *hidden from ages*, i.e., from the beginning of time (Rom 16:25).
 - b) It had been *hidden from generations*, i.e., from every generation of mankind since the beginning of time.

b. God has now revealed this mystery.

- 1) Some, perhaps many, of the Colossian believers were Gentiles. The revelation of this mystery was a great blessing to them. Before this, they had no hope. (Ephesians 2:11-13) *"Wherefore remember, that ye being in*

time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

- 2) Now, for the first time since creation, this mystery of the full extent of God's love for the Gentiles is revealed.

The second fact that we need to understand is that ...

2. This Mystery Contains Riches (v.27)

a. God would make this known to the saints.

- 1) The word "would" assures us that God willed it. It was part of His eternal plan. God planned in eternity past to save Gentiles.
- 2) He chose to make it known to His saints, those who would place their faith in Him and be made holy.

b. Riches speak of abundance.

- 1) Paul here speaks of the "*riches of the glory of this mystery*". The word "*riches*" describes both valuable wealth and abundance. Perhaps both apply here. Their "*glory*" describes the privilege of spending eternity in God's presence. The riches of this mystery are priceless. We are privileged to be children of God almighty and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.
- 2) The riches of this glorious truth rest in two facts:
 - a) Christ lives in every believer. (Ephesians 3:17) "*That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,*" (Romans 8:10) "*And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*" We know this to be true, but we struggle to comprehend and appreciate the fact. Jesus Christ, God Himself, lives in every saint. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, (1 Corinthians 6:19). We owe it to the Lord to keep our body and heart clean and pure in honour of His constant presence.

We go to great effort to prepare for guests in our house, but how much thought do we give to preparing and maintaining our body and heart for the most honoured Guest – the Lord Himself? The clothes we wear, our hairstyle, and our general appearance ought to be fit for entertaining God.

- b) Christ living in us gives us the hope of glory. Christ purchased our hope of eternal glory in heaven. Christ living inside us is a constant reminder of that hope. We do not deserve that privilege and honour. Being Gentiles and not part of God's chosen people, He could have refused to save us. We could have all been doomed to hell.

The third fact that we need to understand is that ...

3. The Mystery is for Every Man (v.28-29)

Generally, when you board an airplane, you walk past the business class seats. They are far more comfortable than economy seats, but they are not for everyone. They are reserved for those who pay a much higher fare. Praise God, the Gospel mystery is for EVERYONE.

a. The mystery is for every person.

- 1) Three times in this verse, Paul emphasises that this truth is for *every man*. The gospel is not just for the Jews. It is not just for the rich or the educated. It is not just for one race. It is for everyone.
- 2) That was an amazing, wonderful truth in the first century when Jews despised the Gentiles. It is still an amazing, wonderful truth today if we rightly see our sinfulness. We justly deserve hell. God is so good!
 - a) (1 John 4:10) "*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*"
 - b) I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus, the Nazarene, and wonder how he could love me, a sinner, condemned, unclean. Refrain: How marvellous, how wonderful! And my song shall ever be: How marvellous, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me! – Charles H. Gabriel