

EPHESIANS: The Mystery Revealed Ephesians 3:1-13

The mystery of God's eternal plan & your place within it

Introduction:

1. **The Bible tells us How the world began & how the world will end...**
 - a. It tells us where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going.
 - b. It reveals the Mystery of God's Eternal Plan—and your place within it.
2. **What is this mystery Paul writes about?**
 - ENGLISH: In English we think of a mystery as something that is unknown
 - GREEK: *mysterion* — it is a secret concealed to all but a few.
 - NEW TESTAMENT: we can see it Defined for us in **(3:3-5)**
 - A mystery that has been concealed for ages—but is now revealed by the revelation of God in His inspired word **(Colossians 1:26)**
3. **Paul is writing this letter from prison...**
 - a. He knows he faces a trial and will probably be executed by order of Nero
 - b. But He is NOT victim! Paul knows that Jesus is Lord—not Nero
 - c. Paul does not call himself a prisoner of Nero or Rome—but of Christ!
 - d. He's already been given a tour of the 3rd heaven!
 - e. He already knows who wins!

I. THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S GRACE: The Gospel

A. THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL (v.1-8)

1. **Paul called it: The Mystery of the Gospel (6:19-20)**
 - a) A Mystery because no one in history could've ever conceived of it!
2. **That the Creator of Time and Space—would enter time and space**
 - a) Not as an angel, but as a human...
 - b) But not just as a human, but as a servant...
 - c) But not just as a servant, but as a sacrifice for the sins of the world!

B. THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S GRACE...

1. **A Mystery even the Prophets and Angels desired to know (1 Peter 1:10–12)**
 - a) The Prophets prophesied of this grace... even angels desired to see it
 - b) God's holy angels rejoice when one lost soul is saved—because they know
2. **A grace so incredible it can only be called 'the Unsearchable Riches of Christ'**
 - a) You can search all the worlds religions—but you will not find grace in any of them
 - b) It is only found in Jesus because of who He is and what He did for us

II. THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S LOVE: The Cross

A. THE MYSTERY OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST (1 Corinthians 2:6–10)

1. **No one Could've ever conceived the Amazing Love of God for us!**
 - That God so loved the world that He gave His only Son to die for our sins

- The Good News of the Gospel... That ANYONE, of ANY Nation, ANY Language, ANY Culture, ANY Background, Can be Forgiven of their sins and Saved by Grace in Christ!
 - That It doesn't matter what you've done in your past... or who your parents were, Or if your rich or poor, Slave or Free, Male or Female
2. **You are created by God → in the image of God → To be with God Forever!**
 3. **But something Horrific Had to Be Accomplished...**
 - in order to Pay Our Un-payable Debt...
 - in order to Redeem Us from Eternal Separation From God...
 - The Horrific Death of Jesus Christ for our sins.

B. THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S LOVE... (3:18-19)

1. To know The Love of Christ for You!
2. Something so incredible it was kept hidden for centuries (Col. 1:26–27 NIV)
Christ in you – the hope of glory!

III. THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S KINGDOM: The Church

A. THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S KINGDOM: The Church (3:9-11)

1. **Jesus preached about the kingdom of God—often in Parables**
 - a) When Jesus told the parable of the sower they asked what it meant
 - b) Notice what Jesus says: (Luke 8:9–11)
2. **The mystery of the Kingdom of God is an open secret...**
 - a) to anyone who wants to open their eyes to see it...
 - b) But it remains hidden to those who don't want to see it
 - c) "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (5:32)

B. THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

1. **The Eternal Kingdom Prophesied centuries ago (Daniel 2:44)**
The Eternal Kingdom That Cannot Be Destroyed
2. **The Church that Jesus Built and purchased by His Blood...**
Even the gates of hades cannot prevail against it! (Rev. 1:5–6 NIV)
3. **Jesus is head of the Church – we are in His Kingdom! (Colossians 1:13–18)**

C. THE MYSTERY MADE KNOWN BY THE CHURCH TO THE UNSEEN POWERS OF THE SPIRITUAL REALM (3:9-11)

1. **The Mystery that the Prophets and Angels Desired to Know...**
 - a) Now Revealed to Us by God's Holy Word...
 - b) Is Now Made Known By the Church to the Unseen Powers of the Spiritual Realm (ESV: rulers and authorities in the heavenly places)
 - c) To God's Holy Angels... to Satan's Fallen Angels... and to all the world

2. That ALL May Understand the Mystery of God's Eternal Plan to save man from before time began

- a) For All to See the Mystery of God's Grace
in the Death of Jesus on the Cross and His Resurrection to Life.

3. The Mystery of God's Eternal Plan and Your Place Within it

(1) The Mystery of God's Grace: Offered Through the Gospel

(2) The Mystery of God's Love: Proven at the Cross

(3) The Mystery of God's Kingdom: Made Known through the Church

4. YOU ARE CREATED FOR A BEAUTIFUL LIFE WITH GOD (1:4-7)

- **THE SETTING:** Before Time Began - 'Before the foundation of the world'
- **THE PURPOSE:** He Planned 'us... as sons.'
- **THE FORETHOUGHT:** 'Predestined' Shows Intent, Design, Purpose
- **THE MOTIVATION:** 'In love' 'according to the kind intention of His will'
- **THE PROCESS:** by 'adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself'
- **THE COST:** 'In Him we have redemption through His blood'
- **THE RESULT:** 'the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace'
- **THE REASON:** "in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began"
(Titus 1:2)

CONCLUSION:

1. This is Why Jesus went to the Cross for our sins...

- We are born again in Baptism when we go to the cross of Christ ourself...
- and we are crucified with Christ,
- buried with Him in baptism,
- and raised to a new life in Christ. (Romans 6:4)

2. (Colossians 1:13-18)