

## Message Nine

### The Mystery of the Gospel

Scripture Reading: Rom. 16:25; Eph. 1:9; 3:3-5, 9; 5:32; 6:19; Col. 1:26-27; 2:2; 4:3

Rom. 16:25	Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel, that is, the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages.
Eph. 1:9	Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself.
Eph. 3:3	That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
Eph. 3:4	By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
Eph. 3:5	Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit.
Eph. 3:9	And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things.
Eph. 5:32	This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
Eph. 6:19	And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel.
Col. 1:26	The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
Col. 1:27	To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
Col. 2:2	That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ.
Col. 4:3	Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound).

#### **I. The basic revelation in the Bible is the unveiling, the bringing to light, of God's mystery; for this reason, the Bible speaks of the revelation of the mystery—Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3, 5.**

Rom. 16:25	Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel, that is, the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages.
Eph. 3:3	That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
Eph. 3:5	Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit.

#### **II. The gospel is the proclamation of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery; thus, Paul could speak of the mystery of the gospel—6:19.**

Eph. 6:19	And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel.
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#### **III. There are five great mysteries in the Bible:**

1. The mystery of the universe is God, who is the meaning and purpose of the universe—Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9.  
Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.  
Rev. 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.  
Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things.
2. The mystery of man is also God—Gen. 1:26; Zech. 12:1; 1 Cor. 2:11.  
Gen. 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.  
Zech. 12:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him.  
1 Cor. 2:11 For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him? In the same way, the things of God also no one has known except the Spirit of God.
3. The mystery of God is Christ—Col. 2:2.  
Col. 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,

4. The mystery of Christ is the church—Eph. 3:4; Col. 4:3.
  - Eph. 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ.
  - Col. 4:3 Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),
5. The mystery of the church is the organism of Christ, the Body of Christ as the enlargement of Christ—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4, 16; 5:30, 32.
  - Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
  - Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
  - Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
  - Eph. 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
  - Eph. 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
  - Eph. 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

#### **IV. In Ephesians *mystery* is a crucial word:**

1. In eternity God planned a will, but it was hidden in Him; hence, it was a mystery—the mystery of His will—1:9.
  - Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself.
2. God's hidden purpose is the mystery, and the unveiling of this mystery in the mingled spirit is the revelation of the mystery—3:3, 5.
  - Eph. 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
  - Eph. 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit.
3. God's mystery is His hidden purpose, and with this mystery there is an economy—the economy of the mystery—v. 9.
  - Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things.
4. Christ is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ—v. 4; Col. 4:3.
  - Eph. 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ.
  - Col. 4:3 Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),
5. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery—1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 5:32.
  - 1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
  - Eph. 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

#### **V. The all-inclusive Christ, who indwells us, is the mystery of God's economy—Col. 1:26-27:**

- Col. 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
  - Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
1. God's New Testament economy is like a great wheel, having Christ as its every part—He is the hub (the center), the spokes (the support), and the rim (the circumference) of the divine economy—Ezek. 1:15; Col. 1:17b, 18b:
    - Ezek. 1:15 And as I watched the living creatures, I saw a wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of their four faces.
    - Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;
    - Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

1. God's intention in His economy is to work Christ into His chosen people so that Christ may be all and in all—3:10-11; Gal. 1:16a; 2:20; 4:19.
  - Col. 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
  - Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
  - Gal. 1:16 To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,
  - Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
  - Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
  
2. Christ is the mystery, the secret, the crucial focus, of the divine economy; this means that the secret of the dispensing of the Triune God into God's chosen people is Christ Himself—Col. 1:25-28, 17b, 18b; 2:9.
  - Col. 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,
  - Col. 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
  - Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
  - Col. 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;
  - Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;
  - Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
  - Col. 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
  
3. Christ is the Head of the Body and the Body of the Head; He is all the members and in all the members of the new man—1 Cor. 12:12; Col. 1:18; 3:10-11.
  - 1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
  - Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
  - Col. 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
  - Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
  
2. The mystery hidden from the ages and from the generations has been made manifest to the saints; this mystery is the all-inclusive Christ as the indwelling hope of glory—1:26-27:
  - Col. 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
  - Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
  
1. The hope of our calling is the hope of glory, which is the transfiguration of our body and the manifestation of the sons of God—Eph. 1:18b; 4:4b; Rom. 8:19, 23-25, 30; Phil. 3:21.
  - Eph. 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
  - Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
  - Rom. 8:19 For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.
  - Rom. 8:23 And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.
  - Rom. 8:24 For we were saved in hope. But a hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees?
  - Rom. 8:25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly await it through endurance.
  - Rom. 8:30 And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Phil. 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

2. The Christ who dwells within us is the mystery full of glory, with countless riches; we are being strengthened into our inner man according to the riches of God's glory, which are being wrought into us—Eph. 3:8, 14-17a.

Eph. 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel.

Eph. 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

Eph. 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

3. Christ as the mystery of God's economy is indwelling us as the hope of glory for our transformation from glory to glory unto the full expression of God—2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 21:10-11.

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Rev. 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

## **VI. In particular, the mystery of the gospel is Christ and the church for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose—Eph. 6:19:**

Eph. 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

1. The mystery of God is Christ, the Head—1:22; Col. 1:18:

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

1. As the mystery of God, Christ is the history of God; the whole "story" of God is in Christ and is Christ—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 5:5.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

1 Cor. 15:45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rev. 5:5 And one of the elders said to me, Do not weep; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so that He may open the scroll and its seven seals.

2. As the mystery of God, Christ is the definition, explanation, and expression of God—the Word of God—John 1:1; Rev. 19:13; Col. 2:2-3.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Rev. 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.

Col. 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,

Col. 2:3 In whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

3. As the mystery of God, Christ is the Firstborn of all creation—1:15.

Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,

4. As the mystery of God, Christ is the Firstborn from the dead—v. 18.

Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

5. As the mystery of God, Christ is the embodiment of the Triune God—2:9.

Col. 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

6. As the mystery of God, Christ is the life-giving Spirit dwelling in our spirit to be one spirit with us—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:16-17a.
- 1 Cor. 15:45      So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- 2 Tim. 4:22      The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.
- 1 Cor. 6:17      But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- Col. 3:4          When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Eph. 3:16          That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph. 3:17          That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
7. As the mystery of God, Christ is the constituent of His Body, the church, which is the one new man—Col. 1:18; 3:10-11, 15.
- Col. 1:18          And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col. 3:10          And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Col. 3:11          Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- Col. 3:15          And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.
8. As the mystery of God, Christ has the first place in all things—1:18b; 1 Cor. 2:2.
- Col. 1:18          And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- 1 Cor. 2:2          For I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.
2. The mystery of Christ is the church, the Body of Christ—Eph. 3:4, 6, 10:
- Eph. 3:4          By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Eph. 3:6          That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel,
- Eph. 3:10          In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
1. Christ, the embodiment of God, is the expression of God, and the church, as the Body of Christ, is the expression of Christ—1:22-23.
- Eph. 1:22          And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph. 1:23          Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
2. In God's economy mystery produces mystery: Christ, the mystery of God, brings forth the church, the mystery of Christ—Col. 2:2; 4:3.
- Col. 2:2          That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,
- Col. 4:3          Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),
3. As the hidden mystery in God's eternal purpose, the church is a mystery within a mystery, for the church is the third stage of one mystery—Eph. 3:4, 9, 11:
- Eph. 3:4          By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Eph. 3:9          And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph. 3:11          According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- a. The first stage is God Himself as the mystery of the universe, the second stage is Christ as the mystery of God, and the third stage is the church as the mystery of Christ—John 1:18; Col. 2:2; 4:3.

- John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.
- Col. 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,
- Col. 4:3 Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),
- b. The church is the mystery of Christ, who is the mystery of God, who Himself is the mystery of the universe—Eph. 3:4, 9; Col. 2:2; Rev. 4:11.
- Eph. 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Col. 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,
- Rev. 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.
4. The church is according to God's eternal purpose, and God created all things so that He could have the church—Eph. 3:9, 11; Rev. 4:11.
- Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- Rev. 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.
5. The church is a constitution of the riches of Christ enjoyed and assimilated by the believers—Eph. 3:8.
- Eph. 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel.
6. Through the church the multifarious wisdom of God is made known to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies—v. 10.
- Eph. 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
7. Related to the mystery of Christ, the church, there is the economy of the mystery; God's economy is His plan and arrangement to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen people in order to produce the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem for the eternal corporate expression of the Triune God; this is the greatest mystery in the universe; nothing is greater or more important than this—v. 9; 1:22-23; 4:16; Rev. 21:2, 10-11.
- Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph. 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev. 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

**VII. All these mysteries are related to the gospel; thus, the mystery of the gospel refers to the entire New Testament economy, and through the gospel we may become persons of meaning and enjoy God as the mystery of the universe—Eph. 6:19; Psa. 36:8-9.**