

# **A Mystery Revealed**

Ephesians 3:2-12

September 21, 2025

## **Opening Illustration**

Can you keep a secret? (Duke of Wellington)

## **Introduction**

Secrets, we all have them and when we have one, we must not tell anyone. God has secrets too and one secret, He finally revealed after keeping it a mystery for thousands of years. It's the mystery that Paul tells us about in today's message.

## **Three Features of the Mystery of God's Grace**

### **1. The hidden mystery is now revealed.**

*In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup> which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. Ephesians 3:4-5*

Paul reminds the church of the great mystery that was hidden but has now been revealed. He tells them that he is a prisoner of Christ. His perspective is firmly focused on Jesus. If he only saw his circumstances, then he may have given up in despair.

But Paul had a divine perspective and completely trusted God.

*God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose”*

*Romans 8:28*

He then talked about the administration of God’s grace that was given to him. The word administration means stewardship. It referred to the management of a household, or business, on behalf of someone else. Paul’s stewardship was from God. It was to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles and to reveal to the Gentiles that they had an equal share in the Kingdom of God.

*I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. <sup>13</sup> Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 1 Timothy 1:12-13*

This mystery was hidden in ages past but has now been revealed by the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament, a mystery is a truth that was hidden by God in the past and is now revealed to those who are in His family. Paul a steward of the mystery and was given the responsibility of sharing it with the Gentiles.

### **Illustration**

The wonderful secret kept hidden.

## 2. The mystery us with new recognition.

*<sup>6</sup> This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.<sup>7</sup> I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. <sup>8</sup> Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup> and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. Ephesians 3:6-9*

The very heart of this letter to the Ephesians is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with the Jews, members together of one body and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus! These are three life-transforming gifts that God has given to us! The love and grace of God are meant for us just as much as for the Jews. God did this and He sent Paul to make it known.

*I am sending you to them <sup>18</sup> to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' Acts 26:17-18*

The more Paul exhorted the Gentiles to trust in Jesus for their salvation, the more his ministry flourished. Until Jesus used him

to open the door of faith to the Gentiles, no Jew knew the full meaning of God's promise to Abraham.

*Scripture, foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "all the nation shall be blessing you" Galatians 3:8*

Paul became a servant of the gospel by the gift of God's grace. The word servant comes from diakonos which means, one who waits on tables. A servant is one who submits to a higher authority. Paul was given a commission by Jesus to preach to the Gentiles the limitless riches of Christ and make known the mystery that had been hidden for ages past.

Paul, whose name means "little" in Latin probably changed his name from Saul because he knew it was Jesus who had saved him by His grace. His name always reminded him that Jesus was the only name worth boasting about.

*May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Galatians 6:14*

### **Illustration**

Make Christ great.

### 3. The mystery's intent is to reflect God's glory.

*His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, <sup>11</sup> according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>12</sup> In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Ephesians 3:10-12*

God wanted all men to come to Him. He began by choosing one man, Abraham and promising him that a nation would come from him. Later He would call that nation out of slavery and lead them into a land He had promised Abraham. He gave them rules to live by as His people, but they failed to obey Him.

He intended for His people to be a light to the nations to point them to the true God, but they failed to do that. He sent His Son to save and redeem not only His people but every person on the face of the earth who would turn to Him.

Now, He's fully revealed His plan. Every person who turns to Him becomes part of His family and receives eternal riches.

Paul uses a great word to describe the grace of God. It is *polupoiklos*, and it means many-coloured. The grace of God is sufficient for any situation which life may bring to us.

God has brought the church into being for the purpose of manifesting His great wisdom to the angels in heaven.

Everything God has ever done has been for His ultimate glory.

For the church there is no greater purpose than to honour Christ. The angels can see the power of God in creation, the wrath of God in the flood and the love of God at Calvary. But above all they see the manifold [multi-coloured, multi-faceted] wisdom that is made known through the church.

*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess...<sup>16</sup> Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:14,16*

This is the privilege contained in the mystery of the church. Though Jew and Gentile were sworn enemies for centuries, now they are one in the church and there is no distinction. They were and are His chosen people, yet Peter reminds us that we too are His chosen people.

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

*1 Peter 2:9*

### **Closing Illustration**

God's Rosetta Stone.