



Grace Notes

Thursday of Epiphany
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Ephesians 3:1-12

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

Gracious heavenly Father, by Your Spirit the mystery of our redemption has been revealed and we are now considered heirs of eternal life. Give us the same Spirit, that we might make known this good news to others. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Mystery Revealed

Are you a fan of mysteries? I enjoy a good mystery, whether it is in a TV or Netflix drama, or in a good novel. A well written mystery doesn’t give away the ending too far in advance. But it does give you enough clues to keep you reading more and wondering who did it? It wasn’t necessarily the butler. While you are trying to piece together all the clues and figure out the who and the how, you might also enjoy the character development, the setting, and the events that are taking place. Not everything is a clue, some things are just as they appear. Sometimes a passing glance, is just a passing glance. In the end, you know the mystery will be solved, answers will be given, and all the pieces will fall into place.

In this text, Paul talks about a mystery, that was finally revealed. He writes, *When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.* As he explains in this letter, the mystery was hidden in ages past, but is now made known by the Spirit. Paul is a proclaimer and revealer of this mystery.

It should be noted that all along, throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, clues were given by God through the prophets. With the New Testament Scriptures, especially the writings of Paul, all the pieces fall into place. The mystery—God’s love extends to the whole world. In Paul’s words, *This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.* This revelation comes as a humbling surprise to the Jews and as an amazing message of good news to the Gentiles. Everyone knew how special and blessed the Jews were throughout their history. Everyone knew about their rescue and redemption in the hands of the mighty God. Everyone knew they were truly favored by God. The mystery is that God also sent the Messiah to rescue and redeem non-Jews as well. What God did for and through the Jews, was really His way of redeeming the whole world. The privilege of the Jews was to be the instrument in the Lord’s hands to bring salvation of all people.

We who are Gentiles, rejoice in this mystery revealed. What is more, we fill the same role as God’s chosen people of old. We reveal this mystery, this good news, to the world. Paul says, *this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.* It is truly by the grace of God, that we the church, can proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. But, as Paul says, this is according to God’s eternal purpose.

Unlike the mysteries you might read or watch, this mystery is about you. You are the one Christ came to save. You are the one who was given the riches of God’s grace. You are the one who is now an heir with God’s people and with Christ.

Please pray for:

- The church, that she might be used by God to lead many to Christ, the Savior
- Our nation that it might find political harmony and common compassion for all
- The sick and dying, that they might find comfort in the care of the Lord
- The effective distribution and use of the coronavirus vaccine