

INTRODUCTION.

CURRENTLY IN OUR STUDY OF COLOSSIANS, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ we are talking about the character of Paul's apostolic ministry ~ ¶¶

▷▷ within the larger topic ~ of Paul's account of his apostolic ministry to the church, ~ which takes up 1:24 - 2:5.

SO WE DON'T GET SO CAUGHT UP IN THE DETAILS ~ AND LOSE SIGHT OF THE BIG picture, ~ a little review.

▶▶ In his account of his apostolic ministry to the church, ~ Paul sets forth ~~~ his ministry of suffering on believers' behalf, ~ 1:24, ~ ~ ¶¶

▷▷ the character of his ministry, ~ 1:25-29, ~ ~ & his ministry of encouragement, ~ 2:1-5.

▶▶ Last week, ~ we began to focus on ~ the character of his apostolic ministry. ⇔⇔ Vs. 25.

▷▷ Here Paul said that ~ he was called by God ~ to serve the church as an apostle.

▷▷ He then identified that his primary ministry ~ was to the Gentiles.

▷▷ After that, ~ he stated the purpose ~ of his calling by God to serve the church as an apostle.

↪↪ And that was ~ to proclaim the whole counsel of God. ⇔⇔ I.e., ~ the full body of God's truth as revealed by him.

↪↪ The full revelation of which ~ was written down in Scripture. ¶¶ 1/15

TODAY, ~ WE'LL TURN OUR ATTENTION ~ TO VERSES 26-27.

IN THESE TWO VERSES ~ PAUL ~ ZEROES IN ON ~ AND EXPLAINS ~ A PARTICULAR mystery that is included in the whole counsel of God.

▶▶²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations ~ but now revealed to his saints. ~ ~ ²⁷ To them ~ God chose ~ to make known how great among the Gentiles ~ are the riches of the glory of this mystery, ~ which is Christ in you, ~ the hope of glory.

▶▶ This can be divided ~ into four overarching points.

▷▷ 1st, ~ verse 26.

↳↳ Paul states the point that ~ the full body of God's truth ~ included this specific mystery ~ that he is going to talk about.

▷▷ 2nd, ~ verse 27a, ~ he states the point that the mystery is for Gentiles too.

▷▷ 3rd, ~ verse 27b, ~ Paul identifies the particular mystery, ~ i.e., ~ "Christ in you."

▷▷ And 4th, ~ verse 27c, ~ the mystery ~ is "the hope of glory."

FOR CLARITY IN EXPLAINING THIS, ~ WE'RE GOING TO SWITCH THE ORDER A LITTLE.

▶▶ 26, ~ This mystery was included.

▶▶ 27b, ~ Paul identifies mystery.

▶▶ 27a, ~ The mystery is for Gentiles too.

▶▶ And 27c, ~ the mystery is "the hope of glory." ↴ ↴ 2/15

VERSE 26.

PAUL STATES THE POINT THAT ~ ¶¶

▶▶ The full body of God's truth ~ includes this particular mystery that he is going to talk about.

▶▶ Now, ~ boiled down and simply put, ~ I believe the idea here ~ is this. ~ Start w/ vs. 25.

▷▷²⁵ I became the church's servant, ~ according to the commission of God ~ that was given to me for you, ~ to make the whole counsel of God ~ fully known. ~ ¶¶

↳↳²⁶ And the whole counsel of God contains ~ this particular mystery ~ that was hidden for ages and generations ~ but is now revealed to his saints.

AT THIS TIME, ~ I THINK IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE FOR EVERYONE ~ TO MAKE sure we have ~ a proper understanding of the word mystery ~ as it is used in the NT.

THE NT WORD FOR MYSTERY, ~ μυστήριον, ~ OCCURS ONLY TWENTY-SEVEN TIMES IN the NT, ~ twenty of them ~ in Paul's writings.

▶▶ Its other seven uses ~ are found in connection with ~ parables about God's kingdom ~ or truths disclosed in the Book of Revelation.

▶▶ And the word is always ~ associated with a verb of revelation or proclamation.

NOW, ~ WE MUST UNDERSTAND ~ THAT THE NT WORD FOR MYSTERY ~ DOES NOT refer ~ to incomprehensible phenomena, ~ unsolved problems, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ or detective thrillers, ~ such as Agatha Christie novels.

▶▶ We shouldn't think in these terms ~ when it comes to the NT word for mystery. ¶¶ 3/15

AND IT DOES NOT REFER ~ TO A SECRET ~ THAT GOD IS UNWILLING TO TELL ~ ¶¶

▶▶ or to something so obscure ~ that it could not be understood ~ even if told.

▶▶ We should not think in these terms either.

THE NT WORD FOR "MYSTERY" ~ REFERS ~ TO SOMETHING ~ ¶¶

▶▶ that had not been revealed in the OT, ~ it was hidden, ~ but has now been revealed by God ~ in the NT.

▶▶ E.g., ~ 1 Cor. 15:51-52.

▷▷⁵¹ Behold! ~ I tell you a mystery. ~ [and here's the mystery] ~ We shall not all sleep, ~ but we shall all be changed, ~⁵² in a moment, ~ in the twinkling of an eye, ~ at the last trumpet. ~ For the trumpet will sound, ~ and the dead will be raised imperishable, ~ and we shall be changed.

▷▷ The phrase ~ *We shall not all sleep* ~ means ~ that there will be a generation of believers alive ~ when Jesus returns.

↳↳ They will not have to die ~ before they get their resurrection bodies.

↳↳ Instead, ~ they will all be transformed, ~ immediately.

▷▷ When Jesus returns, ~ the dead will be raised with their new bodies.

▷▷ And those still alive, ~ will be transformed, ~ also receiving their resurrection bodies.

▷▷ This change will happen instantly for all Christians, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ whether they are dead or alive. ¶¶ 4/15

▷▷ Paul notes ~ that this ~ is a mystery.

↳↳ IOW, ~ this was not revealed in the OT.

▷▷ And God is now revealing it through the apostle Paul.

▷▷ Basically, ~ Paul is saying to us, ~ "let me tell you this wonderful truth ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that was not made known in the OT ~ but is now being manifested by the Lord."

▶▶ And, ~ of course, ~ as we'll see, ~ this is the case for the mystery that Paul references here in Col.

A SIDE NOTE HERE.

▶▶ The NT concept of mystery ~ is very much in keeping with the progressive nature of divine revelation in the Bible

▶▶ Progressive revelation

NOW, ~ THOUGH OUR FOCUS IS ON THE NT WORD FOR MYSTERY, ~ ~ ¶¶

▶▶ for study purposes we should note ~ the OT word for mystery.

▶▶ In the OT, ~ the word ~ "mystery" ~ occurs only in Daniel.

▶▶ The word "mystery" there ~ relates specifically ~ to God's revelation through Daniel ~ ¶¶

▷▷ of dreams and visions ~ whose meanings were hidden to others.

▶▶ Chaps 2 & 4 ¶¶ 5/15

▶▶First dream

▶▶²⁷ Daniel answered the king ~ and said, ~~ "No wise men, ~ enchanters, ~ magicians, ~ or astrologers ~ can show to the king ~ the mystery that the king has asked, ~~ ¶¶

▷▷²⁸ but ~ there is a God in heaven ~ who reveals mysteries, ~ and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar ~ what will be in the latter days. ~~ Your dream ~ and the visions of your head ~ as you lay in bed ~ are these: ~~ ¶¶

↳↳²⁹ To you, ~ O king, ~ as you lay in bed ~ came thoughts ~ of what would be after this, ~~ and he who reveals mysteries ~ made known to you ~ what is to be. ~~ ¶¶

→→³⁰ But ~ as for me, ~ this mystery ~ has been revealed to me, ~ not ~ because of any wisdom ~ that I have more than all the living, ~~ but ~ in order ~ that the interpretation ~ may be made known to the king, ~ and that you may know ~ the thoughts of your mind.

▶▶Ok, ~ that was to help aid you ~ in your understanding of Daniel.

BACK TO COLOSSIANS.

IN VERSE 27b, ~ PAUL IDENTIFIES THE SPECIFIC MYSTERY THAT HE'S TALKING about here ~ and that the whole counsel of God contained.

CHRIST IN YOU. ⇔⇔ I.E., ~ CHRIST LIVES IN BELIEVERS.

▶▶The OT ~ predicted the coming of the Messiah.

▶▶But the idea ~ that He would actually live in His redeemed church, ~ made up mostly of Gentiles, ~ was not revealed.

▷▷It was a mystery. ⇔⇔ Not revealed in OT. ~~ Revealed in the NT. ¶¶ 6/15

IN MATT. 28:20b, ~ WE HAVE THIS PROMISE FROM JESUS.

▶▶ And behold, ~ I am with you always, ~ to the end of the age.

▶▶ Omnipresence.

▶▶ The believer will find ~ that he has a great companion ~ as he goes on his way through life.

▶▶ Goes much deeper than "with us."

▶▶ He is with us. ⇨⇨ But goes much deeper.

THE NEW TESTAMENT REVEALS ~ THAT JESUS TAKES UP RESIDENCE ~ IN ALL believers.

▶▶ Not revealed ~~ Now revealed.

▶▶ In his high-priestly prayer recorded in [Jn. 17](#), ~ Jesus, ~ speaking to the Father, ~ says in [verses 22-23](#), ~ ⇩⇩

▷▷²² The glory that you have given me ~ I have given to them, ~ that they may be one ~ even as we are one, ~~ ⇩⇩

↳↳²³ I in them ~ and you in me, ~ that they may become perfectly one, ~ so that ~ the world may know ~ that you sent me ~ and loved them ~ even as you loved me. ~~ ⇩⇩

→→ And then in [verse 26](#), ~ "I made known to them ~ your name, ~ and I will continue ~ to make it known, ~ that the love ~ with which you have loved me ~ may be in them, ~ and I in them.

▶▶ And in [Gal. 2:20](#), ~ Paul writes, ~ I have been crucified with Christ. ~~ It is no longer I who live, ~ but Christ who lives in me. ⇩⇩ 7/15

NOW, ~ HERE IS SOMETHING WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE, ~ UNDERSTAND, ~ AND BE grateful for ~~ in relation to the indwelling of Jesus.

▶▶Believers ~ have eternal life ~ because Jesus lives in us. ⇨⇨ Source of our eternal life.

▷▷Gal. 2:20 again. ~~ I have been crucified with Christ. ~~ It is no longer I who live, ~ but Christ who lives in me.

▶▶Every believer in him ~ is born again at the moment of saving faith ~ by the act of regeneration ~ which is properly the work of the Holy Spirit.

▶▶That eternal life which is imparted, ~ however, ~ is inseparably related ~ to Jesus Himself.

▶▶This is in fulfillment ~ of the purpose of the incarnation ~ that believers in Him might have life.

▷▷In Jn. 10:10, ~ Jesus said, ~ The thief ~ comes only ~ to steal ~ and kill ~ and destroy. ~~ I came ~ that they may have life ~ and have it abundantly.

▶▶In a similar way, ~ he said to Martha, ~ "I am ~ the resurrection and the life.

▶▶Jesus told the disciples, ~ I am ~ the way, ~ and the truth, ~ and the life.

▶▶And according to John ~ in his first epistle, ~ Whoever has the Son ~ has life; ~~ whoever does not have the Son of God ~ does not have life.

▶▶In all of these passages ~ it is evident that, ~ ¶¶

▷▷while a believer receives eternal life ~ by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, ~~ the life which is imparted ~ is the eternal life ~ which is in Jesus.

▶▶Jesus, ~ and this is what we should recognize, ~ understand ~ and be grateful for, ~~ Jesus ~ is the source ~ of our eternal life. ¶¶ 8/15

NOW, ~ WE SEE FROM OTHER SCRIPTURES ~ THAT ~ GOD THE FATHER ~ AND GOD THE Holy Spirit ~ also dwell in us.

▶▶ Jn. 14:16-17. ~ ~ ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, ~ ~ and he will give you another Helper, ~ to be with you forever, ~ ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, ~ whom the world cannot receive, ~ ~ because it neither sees him ~ nor knows him. ~ ~ You know him, ~ for he dwells with you ~ and will be in you.

▶▶ And Jn. 14:23b. ~ ~ If anyone loves me, ~ ~ he will keep my word, ~ ~ and my Father will love him, ~ ~ and we will come to him ~ and make our home with him.

▶▶ The fact is ~ that all three persons of the Trinity ~ indwell the believer.

▶▶ And if one is present ~ the other persons are also present, ~ 77

▷▷ although their persons can be distinguished ~ and in some cases their ministries.

▶▶ And because of that, ~ we must distinguish between the indwellings.

▷▷ They must not be made identical.

▶▶ Here again ~ we're getting into the area of the Trinity.

▷▷ And it's all very confusing.

SO LET'S TURN ~ TO SOME CONCRETE APPLICATION ~ OF THE INDWELLING IN believers ~ by our Triune God.

▶▶ 2 Cor. 6:16b. ~ ~ For we ~ are the temple ~ of the living God.

▶▶ 1 Cor. 6:19-20. ~ ~ ¹⁹ Or do you not know ~ that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, ~ whom you have from God? ~ ~ You are not your own, ~ ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. ~ ~ So ~ glorify God in your body. 77 9/15

▶▶ My . . . , ~ each of us should understand: ~ our body as a temple of God, ~ who lives within us.

▶▶ Jesus died ~ to pay the high price ~ that purchased sinful people's freedom.

▷▷ His precious blood ~ provided the sacrifice ~ that made believers acceptable to God.

▶▶ Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ God himself ~ took up residence ~ within all those ~ who believe in Jesus for salvation.

▶▶ We therefore, ~ do not belong to ourselves.

▷▷ God bought us, ~ so we must honor him with our bodies.

▶▶ Put simply, ~ we do this ~ through our gratitude, ~ worship, ~ obedience, ~ and service.

▶▶ In Rom. 12:1-2, ~ Paul writes, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ I appeal to you therefore, ~ brothers, ~ by the mercies of God ~ [i.e., ~ because of all he has done for us], ~ ¶¶

↳↳ to present your bodies ~ as a living sacrifice, ~ holy and acceptable to God, ~ which is your spiritual worship ~ [i.e., ~ presenting . . . is true and proper worship]. ~ ¶¶

→→² Do not be conformed to this world, ~ but be transformed ~ by the renewal of your mind, ~ that by testing ~ you may discern ~ what is the will of God, ~ what ~ [or, ~ which] ~ is good and acceptable and perfect.

OK, ~ LET'S NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FOREST FOR THE TREES.

IN VERSES 26-27, ~ PAUL ZEROES IN ON ~ AND EXPLAINS ~ A PARTICULAR MYSTERY that is included in the whole counsel of God. ¶¶ 10/15

▶▶ These verses can be divided ~ into four overarching points.

▶▶ And remember ~ for clarity in explaining this, ~ we switched the points a little.

▶▶ So far, ~ we've looked at [Verses 26](#) and [27b](#).

▶▶ We'll now turn our attention to [verse 27a](#) ~ and then ~ to [verse 27c](#).

IN VERSE 27a, ~ PAUL STATES ~ ¶¶

THAT THE INDWELLING OF JESUS ~ WAS FOR GENTILES ~ AS WELL AS JEWS.

▶▶ Good news for us here, ~ since, ~ I believe, ~ we're all Gentiles.

▶▶ And since that is the case, ~ we should give our full attention ~ to this.

PAUL: ~ TO THEM GOD CHOSE TO MAKE KNOWN HOW GREAT AMONG THE GENTILES are the riches of the glory of this mystery.

▶▶ Though this expression is rather cumbersome, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ at its heart ~ is Paul's abiding conviction ~ that the gospel ~ is for all people, ~ be they Jew or Gentile.

↳↳ [Rom. 1:16](#).

→→ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, ~ for it is the power of God for salvation ~ to everyone who believes, ~ to the Jew first ~ and also to the Greek ~ [[Gentile](#)].

AS WE KNOW, ~ PAUL WAS DIVINELY COMMISSIONED ~ TO TAKE THE GOSPEL TO THE Gentiles. ¶¶ 11/15

▶▶ As the apostle to the Gentiles, ~ Paul was given ~ the opportunity and responsibility ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to declare to them ~ the spiritual life available in Jesus.

▶▶ Paul sought to convey to them ~ that they did not need to remain spiritual "strangers and aliens."

▶▶ Instead, ~ alongside Israel, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ they could be "fellow citizens with God's people ~ and ~ members of God's household."

▶▶ God used Paul's ministry among the Gentiles ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to reveal the mystery ~ that Jesus could indwell even them.

▶▶ Gentiles included.

▶▶ We, ~ Gentiles, ~ should be very grateful for this, ~ that God would include us ~ in his plan of salvation.

IN PAUL'S LAST OVERARCHING POINT, ~ HE SAYS, ~ IN VERSE 27c, ~ ¶¶

THE INDWELLING OF JESUS IN BELIEVERS ~ IS OUR HOPE OF GLORY.

▶▶ The word for "hope" here ~ refers to an assured hope, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ not a vague possibility ~ or even merely ~ an expectation.

THE POINT HERE ~ IS THIS.

▶▶ The indwelling of Jesus in each believer ~ is our assurance ~ that we will experience final glory. ¶¶ 12/15

▶▶I.e., ~ the assurance ⇨⇨ that we will receive ~ all of what God has promised us in the life to come, ~ ¶¶

▷▷and that we will dwell with Jesus ~ in our glorified resurrection bodies for eternity.

▶▶The indwelling of our Savior, ~ gives us this assurance.

▷▷In brief, ~ it assures us of a glorious eternal future.

OVER AND OVER ~ IN THE NT ~ WE ARE GIVEN THIS ASSURANCE.

▶▶E.g., ~ In Ephesians, ~ Paul says that the Holy Spirit dwelling within believers is "the guarantee of our inheritance."

▷▷The word for "guarantee" ~ was used in ancient times ~ ¶¶

↳↳to describe a down payment, ~ promising that the buyer would complete the transaction ~ and pay the full amount.

↳↳The guarantee was binding.

▷▷In the same way, ~ the Holy Spirit ~ is God's guarantee ~ that he will give us ~ everything he promised.

↳↳He is the first payment ~ of all the treasures that will be ours ~ ¶¶

→→because he has purchased us to be his own people.

▶▶In the context of our future inheritance, ~ Peter, ~ in 1 Pet. 1:5 (LEB), ~ tells us ~ ¶¶

▷▷that we "are being protected by the power of God through faith ~ for a salvation ~ ready to be revealed in the last time." ⇨⇨ Continual protection. ¶¶ 13/15

▷▷ God is using his power ~ to continually guard believers ~ until we receive our inheritance.

▷▷ And since it is Yahweh himself protecting us, ~ we are guaranteed ~ to receive our inheritance.

THIS IS AMAZING, ~ GLORIOUS, ~ AND EXTREMELY ENCOURAGING TRUTH.

▶▶ We must not lose sight of this.

▶▶ We get so bogged down in this life, ~ we begin to focus only on it.

▷▷ And that leads to discouragement, ~ and perhaps even depression.

▶▶ We need to keep our focus ~ on our guaranteed, ~ glorious, ~ eternal future.

▶▶ It will give us great joy ~ in the midst of whatever we're going through ~ or will go through ~ in life.

▶▶ And it will help give us ~ the strength and motivation ~ to handle whatever comes our way.

▷▷ At the end of things, ~ there is for us ~ a magnificent eternal future.

↳↳ At the end of things, ~ there is for us ~ everlasting life and joy with our Savior.

▷▷ For believers, ~ persecution, ~ trouble, ~ and affliction are not the end.

↳↳ Beyond these, ~ there lies eternal glory.

▶▶ So let's keep our focus ~ on our guaranteed, ~ glorious, ~ eternal future.

AND LET'S ALWAYS ~ COME BACK TO WHAT PAUL SAYS ~ IN ROM. 8:18 (CSB). ↴ ↴ 14/15

▶▶ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us.

▶▶ This future glory is so great ~ that present sufferings are insignificant by comparison.

▶▶ Also ~ the glory ~ is forever, ~ whereas the suffering ~ is temporary.

▶▶ Troublesome as "the sufferings of this present time" are ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to us who experience them, ~ they are of no weight ~ when set over against the glory ~ that awaits God's people.

▶▶ Paul also has this idea elsewhere.

▷▷ He speaks of "our light and momentary troubles" ~ as "achieving for us an eternal glory ~ that far outweighs them all" (2 Cor. 4:17).

MY . . . , ~ IT IS A REALITY ~ ¶¶

▶▶ that when this life is over ~ there is more, ~ so much more ~ ¶¶

▷▷ than we can ever begin to fathom ~ in the presence of our Savior.

▶▶ Amen. ~ Come, ~ Lord Jesus!

LET'S PRAY 15/15