

Proclaiming the Mysteries of Christ

(Colossians 1:26-27)

Dr. Jim Cecy

Review of Colossians 1:23-25

Every member a minister... "God does not call the qualified; He qualifies the called."

Regarding mysteries (Greek: musterion) in the Bible....

Our Text: "...the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:26-27)

I. The Nature of the Mystery

Colossians 1:26-27 "...the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles."

Deut. 29:29 "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever..."

Mark 4:11 "To you (i.e. believers) has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God; but those who are outside (i.e. unbelievers) get everything in parables..." (cf. Mt. 3:11)

1 Corinthians 2:7 "...we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages..."
(cf. Romans 16:25; Ephesians 1:9; 3:3,9)

A mystery is something hidden in Old Testament and revealed to believers in the New Testament. For example:

- The mystery of the inclusion of Gentiles in the blessing of salvation (Ephesians 3:3-9)
- The mystery of the spiritual union of Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:22)
- The mystery of the resurrection and glorification of our physical bodies (1 Corinthians 15:51)
- The mystery of Christ (Ephesians 3:4)
- The mystery of the gospel (Ephesians 6:19)
- The mystery of lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
- The mystery of the faith (1 Timothy 3:9)
- The mystery of godliness (1 Timothy 3:16)

cf. Mysteries in Colossians (1:27; 2:2; 4:3)

II. The Content of the Mystery "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27b)

Mystery Part #1. "Christ in you..."

"Immanuel" = "God WITH us..." (No Old Testament mention of God being IN us.)

• The mystery revealed by Jesus

"...whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you." (John 14:17)

"In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you." (John 14:20)

"No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." (1 John 4:12-16)

• The mystery revealed by Paul Colossians 1:27 "...Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Romans 8:9-10 "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness."

- **The mystery unknown by others**

Psalms 51:11 “Do not cast me away from Your presence. And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.”

- **The mystery’s impact on our lives today**

Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

- We don't need a list of external rules and regulations. We have the convicting power of the Indwelling Presence of Christ in us.
- We don't need the illuminati to teach us the secret things of God. We have the illuminating power of the Indwelling Holy Spirit who illumines Scripture for us.
- We don't need to be legislated by external rules. We have been liberated from the Law.
- We are able to walk in the power of the Indwelling Christ. We can walk by faith and not by sight.
- We can manifest the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Mystery Part #2. “...the hope of glory.”

Colossians 1:27 “Christ in you, the hope of glory”

1 Timothy 1:1 “Christ Jesus, who is our hope...”

Titus 2:13 “...looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus...”

The Indwelling Presence of Christ is our pledge, assuring us of an eternal inheritance with Christ, an eternity with fellow believers, a new, glorified body, etc.

- **The proper response to our indwelling hope**

Romans 5:2 “...we exult in hope of the glory of God.”

enthusiasm = Greek: entheosmos/enthousiosmos = en + theos = God in you

III. The Proclamation of the Mystery

Colossians 1:25-28 “Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.”

- We are to be faithful stewards (literally, managers) of the mysteries of God (cf. 1 Corinthians 4:1)
- We are to pray fervently for opportunities to share the mystery of Christ

“...that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ...”
(Colossians 4:3)

Prayer Requests:



Growth Group Homework

For the week of June 10, 2012

SERMON SERIES: COLOSSIANS

Message Title: "Proclaiming the Mysteries of Christ"

Dr. Jim Cecy

June 10, 2012

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. This week we talked about the mystery of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). How does it make you feel when you consider that this mystery has been revealed to you, but was hidden for thousands of years, and even today countless millions have never heard the Gospel of Christ?

2. The Bible encourages us to look forward to "the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). How hopeful are you that Christ will return soon? Would you say the hope of Christ's return influences your attitudes and actions on a daily basis? Why or why not?

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DIGGING DEEPER

3. What is the meaning of the word *mystery* in the Bible? (See Romans 16:25-26.)
4. Why are some people able to understand the mysteries of God, while others are not? (1 Corinthians 2:6-14)
5. Why do you think God kept certain truths hidden in the Old Testament? (Ephesians 1:9-10 & 3:8-12)
6. Read Colossians 2:1-3 and finish this sentence: "The key to understanding the mysteries of God is _____."
_____.

7. The phrase "Christ *in* you" (Col. 1:27) reminds us of the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Have you ever thought about why it's important that the Spirit of God dwells *within* us? List as many of the reasons you can think of. (Hint: John 3:3, 16:13; Gal 5:22-23; Acts 11:17-18, etc.)

TAKING IT HOME

8. "Christ in you, the hope of glory..." is not just a mystery to be understood and enjoyed. It's a truth we must labor to share with others. Can you think of someone with whom you would like to share the gospel? Who is it and why? Will you pray daily for that person and look expectantly for God to give you opportunities to share your hope of glory?
9. The English word enthusiasm comes from the Greek compound *en + theos*, which means "God in you." On a scale of 1-10, how enthusiastic are you that the God who created the universe is living inside of you?