

ESSENTIAL TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL

The Foundations of Our Faith

The Culmination of God's Purpose

Ephesians 1: 8b-10

I. God Reveals His Purpose (v. 8)

- A. The riches of God's grace has been lavished upon us with every kind of wisdom and understanding.
- B. He has now revealed to us what once was hidden and unknown: the mystery of His will as set forth in Christ.
- C. Because He is rich in mercy and loves us, God takes pleasure in doing this for us.

II. God Makes Known the Mystery of His Will (v. 9)

- A. What is God's mystery?
 1. In the New Testament: something hidden or kept secret.
 2. A religious truth that man can know by revelation alone and cannot fully understand. - *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*
- B. "Particularly, the word *mystery* in the New Testament does not mean something that is incomprehensible to the human mind, but is rather something that is undiscoverable by the *unaided* human mind." - D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones.
- C. God's wisdom can only be known by means of the Holy Spirit.
- D. Jesus stated that only those who believe in Him will know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

III. This Revealing of the Mystery is Done According to God's Kind Intention Which He Purposed in Christ (v. 9)

- A. In Christ He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
- B. In Christ He has chosen us before the foundation of the world.
- C. In Christ He has adopted us as sons.
- D. In Christ He has redeemed us through His blood and forgiven our trespasses.
- E. In Christ He has given us an inheritance.
- F. In Christ He has sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise.

IV. God Reveals His Plan Suitable for the Fullness of the Times (v.10)

- A. Plan or Dispensation? Stewardship or Administration?
 1. If from the standpoint of one in authority: a plan, economy, or dispensation.
 2. If from the standpoint of one under authority: an office, stewardship, or administration.
- B. God sent His Son in the fullness of time (i.e., at the perfect time in human history), and He will return in the fullness of time (i.e., "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in"—Romans 11: 25)

V. The Culmination of God's Purpose in Christ (v. 10)

- A. The summing up—the reunification, restoration, completion—of all things both in the heavens and on earth in Christ.
- B. Colossians 1: 15-20 echoes this same theme: All things—both in the heavens and on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—were created by Him, through Him, and for Him and in Him all things are held together.

NAU Ephesians 1:7-10

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth ...

ESV Ephesians 1:7-10

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

NKJ Ephesians 1:7 10

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth -- in Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.) What do you think is the significance of God's revealing His purpose in Christ in this passage of Scripture and in this time of human history?
- 2.) How does God make known to us the mystery of His will? What passages of Scripture do you think provide the most clarity to our understanding?
- 3.) What are some of the things that God has done for us "in Christ" and what is their significance to our salvation?
- 4.) Do you understand the difference in the translation of the Greek word *oikonomia* which can mean either administration, stewardship, or plan? Which do you think fits best in verse ten? Why?
- 5.) What does the phrase "in the fullness of time" mean in verse ten? Does this apply to Christ's advent, His second coming, or both? Explain.
- 6.) What do you think the Apostle Paul meant when he referred to "the summing up of all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth?" Does the passage in Colossians 1: 15-20 provide insight? Why or why not?
- 7.) How can we apply **Ephesians 1: 8b-10** to our lives today? What does it tell us?

NOTES

NAU Colossians 1:15-20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, ²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

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