

## The Mystery Hidden From the Ages in God

(Go To Meeting)

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This very phrase, ‘the mystery hidden from the ages in God,’ is actually in Eph. 3:9—Paul speaking and we’re catching this in the middle of his thought, we’ll come back to the beginning to get the context.

Ephesians 3:9: “And that I might enlighten all *as to* what *is* the fellowship of **the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God**, Who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

That’s what the Apostle Paul was talking about. He was saying that God gave Him some things and we’ll read about that, that he might enlighten all as to what is **“the fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God Who... [God the Father] ...created all things by Jesus Christ.”**

In order to understand the context of this, we’re going to go back up to the beginning of the chapter and read this in context to, to arrive at what this is. But we’re going to ask ourselves:

- What is this **mystery** hidden from the ages in God?
- What is Paul talking about?
- How is it that he is going to enlighten us?
- Why was he given this ministry that he might enlighten us as to what is **the fellowship** of the mystery?

Because the word *fellowship* is in here, as well. But:

- What is this mystery hidden from the ages in God?
- How do we have a fellowship in it?

Verse 1: “For this cause I, Paul, *am* the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you” (vs 1-2).

He’s talking to the Gentiles, it is Paul, and he’s going to get to what we just read in v 9.

In v 3, *Paul is starting to talk about this mystery*. “How He made known to me by revelation the mystery...”

There’s a parenthetical statement here right after so but for now let’s leave that out. Let’s just read it without the parentheses and just read what he’s getting to what is his point? *This is important*. It says:

Verse 3: “How He made known to me by revelation the mystery [v 5]: which in other

generations was not made known to the sons of men, **as it has now been revealed to His Holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit**” (vs 3, 5).

So, the Apostle Paul is saying that it was made known to him by revelation this mystery that before was not made known to the sons of man. *It was hidden!* It was a mystery, but it was hidden, ***and now it has been revealed!*** It says, and not only to him, it says to His Holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit. It is very interesting, when Paul talks about this mystery, because now were going to read what he says in the parenthesis, which brings even more light and more context to all this.

Verse 3 “...(even as I wrote briefly before, so that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ)” (vs 3-4).

We see several things here. *We see that:*

- there is a mystery hidden from the ages in God
- there is this mystery that had not been made known to man
- but now has been revealed by the Spirit

Because, *before the Spirit of God was given* to everybody, *this mystery was not able to be understood by anybody!*

Paul was given this commission to go and make known this mystery that was made known to him, to the apostles and to the prophets by the Spirit. And then the purpose of him writing these things is so that when we read this that we are able to comprehend that understanding that he has in the mystery of Christ.

So, it all comes together. He has been sent to preach about this mystery that has been revealed to him. He also says that the mystery ***has been revealed to us as well***. We know that we have the Holy Spirit of God that we receive by the laying on of hands after baptism.

That is he point of what he’s going to talk about here. We’re going to see that the mystery is so great. Obviously this is the whole Plan of God. We don’t have time to talk about everything about the mystery, but were going to see two big aspects of it and were going to delve into one of those aspects.

The very first thing that he talks about right after saying these things that God made to him this mystery ***known and revealed*** to him. He’s writing so that we may get to understand, may be able to

comprehend his understanding in the mystery of Christ. That's what he's aiming to. Paul is aiming for us to comprehend his understanding of the mystery of Christ. Why? Because he himself knows that this mystery is so great and so vast that, that his aim is not for us to understand it all, yet, because he doesn't seem to understand it all either.

He has some understanding. But at least when you read this:

You'll comprehend my [Paul's] understanding in the mystery of Christ, meaning the things that I learned, I pass on. That's what I aim for you to know and understand

It's almost like Fred says in his messages, you know, at 89 years of age, and he says, 'I'm still learning. I don't know everything that there is to know.' Paul has the same outlook and attitude,

Verse 6—*because this is one part of the mystery says:* "That the Gentiles might be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel."

That is one part. One part of this mystery is that the Gentiles or the nations may be joint heirs and a joint body. With who? *With Israel!* That's when it started. And when we read all the Old Testament, it's about Israel. Then here he's opening it to the nations that they "**might be joint heirs and a joint body and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel.**" And then this Gospel, this good news, it says:

Verse 7: "Of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, *which was given to me through the inner working of His power.*"

Paul knows that he only has this understanding by the Spirit, and not only him, but the apostles and the prophets. And his point in writing all of this is that ***we also may understand***, may also get at least his understanding. But that we continue to understand this mystery.

*Then he's stating who he is;* v 8: "To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, **that I might preach the Gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ.**"

That's why he's saying that this mystery is talking about the unsearchable riches of Christ. So there's two parts.

1. the Gentiles might be joined heirs
2. the unsearchable riches of Christ

*Then v 9, which is where we began:* "...and that I might enlighten **all**..."

At this point, he's not talking about Israelites or Gentiles is not talking about that. He's talking about all as to what is ***the fellowship***, because that is why we're all here. All of us that are here together today and keeping the Sabbath, we wouldn't have any fellowship with one another. We probably wouldn't know one another just through life if it wasn't for ***this fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden in the from the ages in God!***

***It has been hidden in God the Father, Who created all things by Jesus Christ!***

Like I mentioned before, ***this is how we know*** that it is God the Father Who created all things by Jesus Christ. We're going to see more things, but before, before we continue let's go to Mark 4, because Jesus very plainly said something that is very important for us to remember.

We talk about a mystery, ***this mystery hidden from the ages in God***, but there's a purpose in this.

Mark 4:11: And He [Jesus] said to them, ***To you it has been given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God;*** but to those who are without, all things are done in parables, ***so that in seeing they may see, and not perceive; and in hearing they may hear, and not understand;*** lest they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them."

This is amazing, because. Jesus Christ is telling His disciples, the Jew has been given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God. It is a mystery and it is hidden, and ***it is hidden from the ages in God, but to us it has been given!*** We know that because when we, read John 17, Jesus Christ prayed for us, as well. He said

I don't pray for these only [referring to His disciples] but I pray for those who will believe in Me through their word.

*Which is **us**, it's you and me!*

*It has been given to us to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, to know the mystery hidden from the ages in God, and to others it hasn't!*

- it sounds exclusive
- it sounds very elitist

***But its not! Its not!*** It's just the will of God. It's just the will of God, ***because we know He has a Plan!***

Let's go back to Eph. 3 because this is very important. Once we remember now that it has been given to us to know the mystery. of the Kingdom of God, and this mystery hidden from the ages in God (v 9), then Paul tells us the purpose:

Ephesians 3:10: “So that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church...

All the called out ones; all that are being enlightened, those that are being called, those to whom he has been given to understand the mysteries—which is you and I, brethren.

Verse 10: “So that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places.” **Be made known to them!**

It is something, it’s really amazing that God would do these things, that God would open our minds and open our hearts to receive His Word, **to understand the mystery!** Because it is a mystery, **but its not to remain a mystery to those who are being called, to those who, to whom He’s given to understand these mysteries!**

It says that **‘I might enlighten, so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known!’**

- What is this manifold wisdom of God?
- What does it entail?

In understanding this **mystery hidden from the ages in God** and understanding the purpose of the manifold wisdom of God, were going to start to understand more of this second part of the mystery.

One part, like I mentioned, is talking about **how the Gentiles might also be part of this Plan** right now, and then the other part is **the unsearchable riches of Christ!**

1-Cor. 2:6 is something amazing! These are things that are very deep that God has in His Word.

1-Corinthians 2:6: “Now we speak wisdom among the *spiritually* mature; however, *it is not the wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing.*”

This is the frame of reference that Paul is speaking to. It has to be to those who are being given to know the mystery. It is given to those who are spiritually mature. Those who have received the Holy, but it is only among those who have spiritual maturity or are attaining onto that spiritual maturity.

“...**however, it is not the wisdom of this world...**”

Don’t be confused. Its not the things that the world considers wise or how they do things. Nothing of that! “...nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing” **because that’s all that they’re achieving.** They’re achieving nothing!

Verse 7: “Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God **in a mystery...**” *Here’s that word again, that mystery here:*

- we saw the mystery hidden from the ages in God
- we see the mystery of Christ
- we’ve seen that to us it has been given this mystery

When we talk about the wisdom of God, its also a mystery.

“...*even the hidden wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory” (v 7).

Meaning *there is a plan.* But the wisdom of God is how is that Plan going to be carried out?

There are two aspects to this. This is a **macro aspect**, the whole Plan of Salvation *for all mankind* that involves every human being who has ever lived. But then there’s also the aspect of the internal, **the micro**, the individual, the personal, Which is that process of conversion in each person.

That is a mystery! That is the hidden wisdom of God. How can he do all of these things in the macro and also in the individual person? And That’s really where I want us for us to focus today: **in the person.**

- What is this mystery?
- What is this wisdom of God foreordained before the ages **unto our glory?**

Then he explains; v 8: “which not one of the rulers of this world has known...”

None of them has known this, because **they’re searching**—not the wisdom from God—**their own wisdom!** They’re searching all of these things that are coming to nothing. They’re searching:

- for power
- for influence
- for their own ways
  - ✓ apart from God
  - ✓ they deny God

That’s what they’re doing, **but none of the rulers of this world has known** and it’s still true today, probably more than ever.

There’s less and less belief in God and in the Bible every day that goes by. It says:

“...(for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory)... [they did not know] ...but according as it is written, ‘The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him’” (vs 8-9).

We know, we've read this verse many, many times before, and we think about how we don't know, we don't really know what the kingdom of God is going to be like or what being a spirit being will be like, that's true. But at the same time there's another aspect of the Scripture that is a little different if we read:

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God."

For ordained before the ages unto our glory, **God has revealed them to us by His Spirit!** Isn't that what we read before in Eph. 3?

That it's now being revealed to the prophets, to the apostles, and to everyone who reads? *At least that's Paul's desire!* So here, we're seeing that, yes, there is a mystery hidden from the ages in God that:

- involves the macro and the micro
- involves the personal and the collective
- involves everyone
  - ✓ Jews and Gentiles
  - ✓ Israelites and Gentiles
  - ✓ Israelites and all the other nations

*That's what we read and it's so true!*

- What is this understanding of this mystery here?
- What is the manifold wisdom of God?
- How is that manifested?
- How are we understanding this mystery?
- How does God do it individually?
- What does this have to do with us?

Because if we understand more about what God is doing with us individually, personally, *were going to be amazed*; not only amazed, ***its going to change our lives*** as to:

- how we live
- how we think
- how we yield to God

That's why God has revealed them to us by His Spirit.

"...for the Spirit... [the Holy Spirit] ...searches all things—**even the deep things of God**" (v 10).

That is what God is showing us. That's what He wants to share with us"

- the mystery hidden from the ages in Him
- the manifold wisdom of God
- the mystery of the riches of Christ
- the deep things of God

Verse 11: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man, which *is* in him?..."

No animal can understand the things of man. No animal can reason, think and draw conclusions, form thoughts and ideas and all of these other things. The animal kingdom was not given that, or the plants or the trees or anything like that. In the same way also that just, just how different are the animals and all of the living things in creation to man. That's how, how different these thoughts, this mystery are from the thoughts of man. That's how different it is from:

- the human reasoning
- the human logic
- the human understanding
  - ✓ to the understanding that God has
  - ✓ to the manifold wisdom of God
  - ✓ to the understanding of this mystery

That's how different, probably even more, but that's what it says.

In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God" (v 11).

***But we have that Spirit; we have the Holy Spirit of God!***

Verse 12: "Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know... [that it wouldn't remain a mystery] ...the things graciously given to us by God."

That's exactly what Paul was talking about in Eph. 3, that

God has given me [Paul] this revelation; God has made me know to know and understand these things and I'm writing so that you would understand these things. as well

*That's why he goes into this detail!*

Were gonna see how much detail of this mystery He understood so that we might know its not to remain in ignorance. It's not for it to remain a mystery to us, because God has given us all these things ***graciously!***

That is a very important part, not that we may boast over anybody else, ***but that we may be thankful, and that we may be humbled by this knowledge and understanding!*** Because with this knowledge and understanding comes great responsibility. This should really propel us:

- to love God more
- to understand God more
- to search His Word more

- to live in a different way

Verse 13: “Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the Holy Spirit in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*.”

What he’s saying is, ‘Listen, in order to understand these things, you have to have the Holy Spirit. Because without that, you’re not going to understand. But even having that, that’s how **God** is going to communicate those things to you. They’re going to be the words taught by human wisdom, not, not words taught by human wisdom, **but the words of God, taught by God Himself, through the Spirit**, so that we can understand it. But you need the Spirit of God.

And that’s why Paul is talking in Ephesians about the understanding of this mystery, because that is the key. That’s what God wants us to understand.

Eph. 2 is where he’s talking about this part, and actually he talks about both parts, but it starts with the individual part of that mystery.

How does God do this? That’s where I would like for us to focus. There are other things, too, about the mystery. We probably won’t have time to talk about those, but he talks about the **macro aspects** of this.

But it is an amazing thing when we know and understand, and its very humbling to know that God is giving us these things as well. That God is giving us because He’s no respecter of persons and how He made Paul to understand all these things. He can also give to us:

- **IF** we yield to God
- **IF** we study
- **IF** we
- **IF** we humble ourselves before Him

*He wants to give all of these things to us!*

He inspired Paul to write it so that we might be sharing in that understanding. What is this mystery? Or this *individual aspect* of the mystery? Not just the collective, not just the fact that it’s Israel and the nations, but it is each one who receives the Spirit of God.

Because as we read, we need the Spirit of God to understand these spiritual things. Without the Spirit of God, we cannot understand the spiritual things of God. But it is a mystery, but not to remain a mystery, but for us to be enlightened and:

- continue to be enlightened as we go forward
- continue to learn about this mystery

- continue to learn about this wonderful Plan of God in the individual, the Plan that God has for you

Not just for all humanity, not just for Israel, not just for the nations, but for **you as a son or a daughter of God** that has been called.

Eph. 2:1 is where he’s talking about this part, and, and, and we saw that in Eph. 3:1, ‘For these cause...’ What cause? The things that were going to read in Eph. 2.

So, I’m going a little bit backwards, I’m starting kind of like at the end and going back to the beginning, but this is that mystery, because that’s what he’s talking about in Eph. 3:9, **the mystery hidden from the ages in God!**

Ephesians 2:1 *explains the beginning of this mystery in the personal aspect for each one of us:* “Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins.”

Paul is talking to himself; he knows and understands. Its not just us, its every human being. He’s talking about the process of conversion. He says”

Verse 1: “Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins.”

The reason he says ‘you,’ is so that we understand, so that we—each one of us—takes it personally, and that we know and understand that this is true. ‘**I** was dead in trespasses and sins. That **you** were dead in trespasses and sins.

Verse 2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world... [because we were all there] ...according to the prince of the power of the air...”

Sometimes we do sin; we do trespass, but it’s different now. We are not dead in trespasses and sins anymore *But we did walk:*

“...in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience” (v 2).

- Why?
- What spirit is the one that is working within the children of obedience?
- What is the spirit that is working within us now?

*We read it; it is the Holy Spirit of God!*

Verse 3: “Among whom also we **all** once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh...”

That’s true, we can’t deny that. He’s just starting to reveal this mystery. He has to start at the

very beginning. “We were dead in trespasses and sins...” and its almost a huge blanket-statement. Because it wasn’t just what we did, it’s the reason why we did it. We did it because that spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience--the spirit of the world, the spirit of Satan, the devil—that was our spirit. That what was, what was moving us. and we had our

“...conduct in the lust of the flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature...” (v 3). *By nature, without having to do anything!*

“...*the children of wrath, even as the rest **of the world***” (v 3)—*which was added, but it’s to give understanding*

So, two big blanket statements. We were all dead in trespasses and sins. And it really doesn’t matter what kind. The one who breaks one commandment breaks them all, is guilty of them all. It doesn’t matter; it’s very general. We were all dead in trespasses and sins. BUT:

- in the individual, each one of us was dead in trespasses and sins
- the spirit of Satan the devil, the spirit of the children of disobedience was also in us
- we had our conduct in the lust of the flesh
- we were doing whatever we wanted to
- we were by nature children of wrath, the wrath of God!

Because those who break His Law are accumulating wrath to themselves, unless there is repentance and that’s what were going to go to.

But it’s just setting the stage to understand this mystery and this is the very beginning to admit, to recognize that we were dead in our trespasses. That we were no different than anybody else and that by nature we were children of wrath, the wrath of God, that we were alienated from God, that we were separated from God from because of those sins.

*Then this is what happens;* v 4: “But God, Who is rich in mercy... [He gives us a reason]: ...because of His great love with which He loved us.”

See how he goes from the, the individual to the collective. He says, ‘You were dead in trespasses and sins and you walked in this way.’ *We all* had our conduct, then he includes sins of labor, we were all there. And then he says:

Verse 4: “But God Who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.)” (vs 4-5).

We have been saved by this favor, but the favor of God. Because, because of His mercy, because of His great love, even when we were dead, He reached out and said, ‘Wait a minute, get out of this cycle; get out of everything that you’re doing.’

Verse 6: “And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.”

That is a true statement, not only a prophetic statement, but a true statement now. How do we know that He has raised us up together and has caused us to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus?

John 15 is the answer; v 4 is where Jesus is instructing His disciples. We read this every Passover because these are the words of the New Covenant. Jesus instruct us:

John 15:4: “Dwell in Me, and I in you.... [that’s how] ...As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me.”

We are to dwell in, in Jesus Christ. And He clarifies it:

Verse 5: “I am the vine, *and you are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; **because apart from Me you can do nothing.**”

That’s how, I just want to point out that it says that Jesus Christ said for us to dwell in Him, and He in us. Obviously, through the same Spirit, but when we read Eph. 2:6 this is not just about the future. This is not just about the resurrection, to be raised up together, this also talks about that, of course. It says, but he says, past tense, has caused us to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus because Christ Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father right now.

If were dwelling in Him, He has then caused us to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus because were dwelling in him. If we’re dwelling in Him, he’s dwelling in us through the same Spirit. **How do we know?**

Ephesians 2:7 “So that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

He means what he says and he says what he means. And yes, of course, v 6 six is also prophetic because there are promises in Revelation where Jesus Christ says to the one who overcomes, I will give to him to sit in My Throne as I have over overcome and has sat with the Father in His Throne.

That’s what he says here, too. I’m not

discounting that, but He has already raised us up together in the Spirit, because we are of one spirit with Christ.

It “...**has caused us to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**, so that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (vs 6-7).

We have not yet seen the exceeding riches of His grace. We’ve seen His grace and we have seen the riches of His grace, but maybe not yet **the exceeding riches** of His grace. I don’t know. But it looks like there’s so much more, exceeding the riches of His grace is something hard to comprehend. “...in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

If we stop and think about what He has done in Jesus Christ giving His life for us, an eternal life that had no beginning, to come and live as one of us, live as a man, and then die on the cross for us. It’s an amazing thing! It’s a very profound thing. That is His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. Now, we haven’t seen “...the exceeding riches of His grace...” completely, but that is the purpose. That’s why in Eph. 3, Paul said:

So that when I write this you might be able to understand this. That you may understand the manifold wisdom of God. The wonderful wisdom of God that takes care of every aspect of your conversion.

And in taking care of that aspect of your conversion, He’s actually carrying out His Plan for all humanity. Because this is not just about you. And it’s not just about the Millennium. And it’s not just about the White Throne Judgment period. It’s about:

- the New Heavens and the New Earth
- eternity
- the entire Plan of God
- the Kingdom of God forever and ever

That kingdom that shall not be taken away, and that we:

- may know **those exceeding riches** of His grace
- may know that wisdom
- may be filled with the fullness of God

We’re going to see that, but that’s what it’s explaining here. It’s explaining something amazing! It says for by grace.

We continue studying this process in the individual, in the personal,

Verse 8: “**For by grace you have been saved through faith...**”

There’s nothing, *absolutely nothing* that we’ve done to deserve salvation. It’s only by the grace of God. Salvation is a gift 100%!

Verse 8: “For by grace you have been saved through faith... [If we believe, if we truly believe Who God is, and Who Jesus is] ...and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God”—100% the gift of God! ***This is not of yourself!***

And then he clarifies it again, because especially for us. We sometimes tend to get too caught up in our works. This is not of your own works. That’s not the reason. ***It’s just because God loved you and He had compassion in you! And when you were dead in your trespasses, He pulled you out***

- to teach you
- to show you His wonderful wonders
- to show you His wisdom
- to show you His love
- to cover you with His love

Verse 9: “**Not of works, so that no one may boast.**” *He never wants any of us to boast about anything!*

And here comes in v 10, one of the great aspects of this mystery, not only the things that we’ve been reading, but:

Verse 10: “For **we are His workmanship**, being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them.”

**We** are **His** workmanship. Let’s stop there and think about it.

- What does that mean?
- What does it mean for us to be His workmanship?

It means that we are not the authors of our salvation, of our construction of character. Were not the authors of any of that. We are ***His*** workmanship. We are the object of ***His*** love.

He loves us, and He’s building us. He’s working on us every day, and as we’ve seen, through His Holy Spirit, to understand the spiritual things through spiritual means. Even the deep things of God. God wants that!

- Have you stopped and thought about that?
- Have you asked God in prayer, what are Your deep things, God?
- What are these deep things that you want us to know?

Maybe we should, for we are His workmanship. So much of our walk with God, obviously, has to do with what we have to do, *what is our part, because God will take care of everything else*. But today I would like for us to think about that. No, its not, It's not that way.

God is sharing these things so that we might be enlightened about this manifold wisdom of God, about this mystery, that we may be understanding this mystery hidden from the ages in God, because its not just the macro plan of salvation.

It is *the individual work* that He's doing in you, because you are His workmanship. He says it for all of us. We are His workmanship. But each one of you individually is a work of art.

It really is a work of art. We are his workmanship, the character that He's developing in each one of us, according to the gifts and the personality and all the things that make you *you* that are unique.

We are his workmanship. We are the object; we're not the subject. So, many times we think about: What do I have to do to earn salvation? It's like nothing, *nothing*, because salvation doesn't come by that. You have to love and obey God, that's true, *but that's not to earn salvation!* Let's not get the two mixed up.

There are things that you have to do if you love and obey God, and you're really coming under His wing to be worked on by Him, because we are His workmanship. But you're the object. You're not the one who's going to carry it out. How many times in our past we've just been thinking about us, *us, us*, instead of thinking of God.

We've just focused on ourselves and the things that we need to do, and that's important; that has its place. But the most important thing that we can do is *to think on God and to yield to Him!* That's the most important thing, because we are His workmanship. We are being created in Christ Jesus unto the good works. God already has those good works. He's going to put us in that path. He's going to make it happen. His manifold wisdom is going to carry it out if we cooperate, which is the biggest thing that we have to do. And that is what God wants us to know, to understand.

This is what Paul understood. This is what he was saying: *WE* "...are being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works..." so that we may do those good works that God ordained beforehand..." meaning He already had a Plan. He already had all these things that were going to come. Not only the preaching of the Gospel, the changing of a people, the saints:

- so that they may labor in the Millennium as kings and priests
- so that all the people that come from the Millennium may labor in the Great White Throne Judgment
- so that everybody helps the next generation, the next people that are coming
- so that all may come to the knowledge of God and the unity of the Spirit.

That's what He wants. That's exactly what He wants. Those are the good works! But this understanding that we are His creation, that is part of the mystery; a big part of the mystery of the individual. Not only that we've been rescued, like we read in the first verses, but also, the rest of the chapter that talks about more of the macro.

But, and I would like for us to think about this in particular, the individual, which is what Paul is leading with, and what it says that we are God's workmanship.

This was known from the beginning. This is not just New Testament doctrine. David knew this. This is the Psalm of David. We will see that Psalm 138:1 is the key.

Psalm 138:1: "I will praise You with my whole heart; before the gods I will sing praise to You."

That is the key! The reason that David understood is because he praised God with his whole heart because his focus was on God, *not on himself, not on his own salvation, not on his own works!* That's why Paul says, 'not of works so that no one may boast,' *because God doesn't want us to boast!* What God wants us to do is:

- to *love* Him
- to *look to* Him
- to *believe* Him
- to *let Him work* in us

We are His workmanship, and that we will praise Him with our whole heart and we give our whole heart to the Lord!

Like most 'Christians' say, *but actually do it!* What does that mean to actually do it? *Obey His commandments!* That's what David means. That is the expression of our love for God. That's not our works unto salvation and that's nothing to boast about. That's only the natural thing if we love God.

That's why loving God and keeping his commandments always go together.

Verse 8: "The LORD will perfect His work in me..."



David knew that he was God's workmanship. This is not new. Paul put it in writing so that we would see the words clearly. But David knew this in his heart, and then he wrote about it.

Verse 8: "The LORD will perfect His work in me; Your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever...."

David knows that God was doing a work in him, that he was the workmanship of God. And then he knows why:

"...Your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.... [the reason is the love of God] ...do not forsake the work of Your own hands" (v 8).

Meaning, I have no chance without You. You're making me! That's a great part of the mystery that we have to understand individually, before we understand the other aspects, the macro aspects.

But today, like I said, wanted to just focus on this part:

- that we are His workmanship
- that He has rescued us
- that there is a mystery that He's carrying out
- How does one person go from being a carnal human being—
  - ✓ walking in the lust of the flesh
  - ✓ being led by the spirit of the world
  - ✓ being led by the spirit of the children of disobedience—to being a born child in the Family of God?
- How does that happen? ***It's through the workmanship of God!***

*David understood this!*

"...Your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever; do not forsake the work of Your own hands" (v 8).

Psalm 139 is a song to the chief musician, a Psalm of David. This is really going to start to enlighten us about this mystery. But with the frame of reference that there is a mystery:

- **Why did God create man?** *That's the ultimate question!*
- **Why am I here?** *That's what everybody wants to know!*

***That's a mystery hidden in God from the ages!*** That is *that mystery!* It was hidden ***because God is going to reveal it to those who are truly seeking Him!*** God is going to reveal that mystery of how the process of conversion plays out.

But this Psalm 139 tells us a lot about that, using the physical terms. Those are the things that

we understand easier, and then to understand it in the spiritual aspect as well.

Psalm 139:1: "O LORD, **You have searched me and have known me.**"

See how this goes together with what you just read? "...You have searched me and known me." Yeah, You did know:

- that I was dead in trespasses and sins
- that I was walking in the lust of the flesh
- that I was fulfilling the desires of the flesh
- that I was not paying attention to You or to anything good

"...**You have searched me and have known me.**"

David knew that. He knew that it was the work of the God's own hands, and he pleaded with God to not forsake that work. We are His workmanship, and that's part of that, a great part of that ***mystery hidden from the ages in God!***

Verse 2: "You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thoughts afar off."

He understands our thoughts all the time, afar off.

Verse 3: "You measure my going about and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways."

It's not this false religion image of God that He's just sitting there to see when we mess up, to see how He's going to punish us. No, that's not the God we serve. The God we serve is looking at us lovingly, lovingly:

- with compassion
- with mercy
- *with love*

He does know our thoughts; He has searched us and has known us:

- that we have felt after God
- that we want to follow Him
- that we have made a covenant at baptism

Verse 3: "You measure my going about and my lying down, and are acquainted with **all** my ways."

So, its not only thoughts it's also our actions. He knows everything that we think and everything that we do. But not to accuse us. ***He's not the accuser!*** That's the false god; that's 'the accuser of the brethren that is accusing us day and night'!

But that we have a High Priest Who is Jesus Christ that is saying, ‘No, Father, I gave My life for them and God looks at us lovingly.

He knows our thoughts and He knows our works and Jesus Christ also says that in Revelation, ‘I know your works.’

Verse:4 “For there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, You know it altogether.”

He knows even what were going to say, He knows that. Again, not to accuse us, but to work on us. *We’re the object of His love!*

Verse 5: You have enclosed me behind and in front... [You’re protecting us] ...and laid Your hand upon me.”

- this is protection
- this is caring
- this is love
- this is the God we serve

***He loves us so, so much!***

When we really understand it, were going to say the same words that David said here in:

Verse 6: “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.”

- How is it, Lord, that you care about me?
- How is it that You’re working in me?
- How is it that You pay attention to me?
  - ✓ to everything that I think
  - ✓ to everything that I say
  - ✓ to everything that I do

*That’s what we read! That’s the Truth!* It comes on the heels of what we just read.

Psalm 138:8: “...do not forsake the work of Your own hands.” *You are my God*, with the conviction that the Lord will perfect His work in him! That’s what we read, and that’s Who God is.

Psalm 139:13: *read the entire Psalm, its amazing; it’s something to really meditate on:* “For You have possessed my reins; You have knit me together in my mother’s womb.”

That is part of the mystery, because to this day, scientists really do not understand, can’t figure out how is it that from two tiny little cells, a whole human being is developed and born.

It’s amazing! It is really amazing! God did it that way as a mystery, because that’s exactly what were going through spiritually. We are a tiny bit of the Holy Spirit of God in us, and how that develops in this life; ***to develop the character in the mind of Christ!***

He’s knitting us together in my mother’s womb. The Church is also referred to as our mother. That’s where we being together, we being knit together, the Body of Christ.

Also, individually were being transformed and that in and of itself is part of that ***mystery hidden from the ages in God!***

Verse 13: “For You have possessed my reins; You have knit me together in my mother’s womb.”

We don’t know how in the physical, and much less in the spirit. But it’s something that He can reveal. He wants us to know that. He wants us to know how He’s changing us.

Verse 14: “I will praise You, for I am awesomely and wonderfully made...”

It’s not just in the physical; it is true in the physical for sure. We are awesomely and wonderfully made because were made in the image of God—awesomely!

“...Your works are marvelous and my soul knows it very well” (v 14).

We know that the works of God are marvelous and ***the greatest work of God is that Spirit of God dwelling in us and Him:***

- teaching us
- showing us
  - ✓ how to think
  - ✓ how to act.
  - ✓ how to speak

All of these things is what He’s teaching us in the Spirit, in order to communicate spiritual things by spiritual means. That’s what we read, and that’s what He wants.

This is, “...Your works are marvelous and my soul knows it very well.”

We know ‘soul’ is this body, this person, we know it very well.

Verse 15: “**My substance** was not hidden from You when I was **made in secret and intricately formed** in the lowest parts of the earth.”

- What is our substance?
- What is that substance that was not hidden from Him?

It was those groups of cells in the physical. That’s the substance. The substance is just those little groups of cells that develop, and that’s the substance, the flesh. Then the heart forms, and the blood, and all of the limbs start to form, first the

head, and its an amazing thing! But that's the substance.

What is our substance now in the Spirit?  
***This is the Spirit of God within us!***

That is also not hidden from Him. He gave it to us! He's dwelling in us through His Spirit. This is "...when I was made in secret..."

*We are **being made in secret** right now!* That's why the world doesn't understand. The world doesn't see it. But we are being made in secret. "...**and intricately formed** in the lowest parts of the earth."

That's when we were being formed in the womb of our mother, and we all went through that process. It was a mystery and we didn't even know it. We didn't even know that was happening.

- Do we know now what is happening spiritually?
- How He is developing His children through the Spirit?
- Do we know now how He is developing the mind of Christ in us?
- Do we know that?

***That is something to really meditate on!*** It is something amazing, and then it says:

Verse 16: "Your eyes did see my **substance**, yet, being unformed..."

What I'm saying is that the substance, those cells, yet being unformed, didn't have any shape. It didn't have anything It was like a dot **and it was not hidden from God!** He knew us from that moment on because he gave that spark of life.

"...when I was made in secret and intricately formed in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes did see my substance, yet, being unformed; and in Your book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet, there were none of them" (vs 15-16).

***Spiritually the same thing is happening. All*** our members, ***all***, everything is being fashioned right now:

- the character of God
- the mind of Christ
  - ✓ the love
  - ✓ the compassion
  - ✓ the mercy

All of these characteristics, all these attributes are being in 'continuance,' meaning *all the time, through everything we go through, in continuance or fashion* "...when as yet, there were none of them," *because there were none of them!*

We did not have the fruits of the Spirit right at baptism. Hopefully we had some, we displayed some, if the Spirit was with us. When we're called the Spirit is with us, not in us, yet; but when were being called, when were striving to do what's right. But the same thing happens spiritually, and to meditate on this process.

Verse 17: "How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!..."

How precious is that to God? ***To see His children develop and change:***

- ✓ to not speak the way that we used to speak
- ✓ to not think the way that we used to think
- ✓ to not do the way that we used to do
- How precious are those thoughts to Him?
- How precious are those thoughts to us?

***When we see that we are the workmanship of God in the Spirit!***

"...How great is the sum of them!" (v 17).  
How great is it? *It's something amazing!*

It really is a mystery that has been **hidden in God!** That He had this Plan to transform us into **His** children! *If you tell most people out there that:*

- you're going to be a child of God
- you're going to be like God
- you're going to be part of His Family

*They'll think you're crazy and blasphemous!*

That's what they think because they're cut off from God, at least temporarily, *until their time comes!* But to us, ***it's to meditate on!***

Verse 18: "If I should count them, they are more than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You."

To think about that, to think about this process of conversion, and to think that this is the mystery, that this is **the mystery hidden from the ages in God!** This is a big part of the mystery. This is how it all takes place individually, then collectively makes the entire Plan of God come to fruition. Which is amazing, because everything, *everything* that He does:

- the Passover
- the Feast of Unleavened Bread
- Pentecost

***Everything is about His Kingdom, the ones that He's bringing,*** which is hopefully everybody; He wishes none to perish, but that's what He wants.

But to understand this process, and to see that we are His workmanship. This is an amazing thing when we really think about this mystery.

Another time we'll talk about Eph. 2 and the rest of the chapter He's talking about the macro and he's talking about:

- how He's bringing together all the nations
- how Jesus Christ is our High Priest
- how He brought down the middle 'wall of partition'

What all this means and how He's making us all together. But we've been talking about *the individual* face of this mystery.

We've read Eph. 3:10 about the manifold wisdom of God.

Ephesians 3:11: "According to *His* eternal purpose, which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord, **in Whom we have boldness and direct access with confidence through His very own faith**" (v 11-12).

- we have this, brethren
- we have access to God
- we have His Spirit

*He loves us so much*

- we are His workmanship

***IF*** there's nothing else that you remember about this *mystery hidden in God from the ages, IF* you remember nothing else, ***remember you are His workmanship!*** This is how ***He*** is doing it, ***not you!***

Don't be discouraged when you see your own sins and your own shortcomings and falling again and doing the things that you don't want to do, like Paul wrote about. Don't be discouraged because that's part of the Plan.

Not that you sin purposely. That's not what I mean. But when it does happen It's part of getting rid of that and that we learn the next lesson, that we go ***from strength to strength***, and that ***God gives us that understanding of the mystery personally!***

But if you remember nothing else, ***remember you are His workmanship***, you're not going to save yourself, you can't do that. ***Your obedience is not to save yourself, your obedience is because:***

- you love God
- you're yielding to God
- you're showing Him that you're yielding to Him

*so that He may do with you as He wishes!* That is the most important thing!

This is an amazing thing! This is what Paul wanted when he was writing all these things:

Verse 16: "That He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man."

*That's what we're talking about, the inner man, the inner transformation of what we go through! Why? The purpose is:*

Verse 17: "**That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.**"

***That you believe that Christ dwells in you, and you in Him, and that He is going to carry out His purpose for you!***

Just like we read in Psa. 138, that *He will not forsake the work of His hands, but that you contemplate, that you meditate on everything that He has done!*

As it says in Psa.139, do you understand that not only in the physical, but in the spiritual?

Verse 18: "*And that being rooted and grounded in love... [because God is love] ...you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints... [that's why it's a fellowship of this mystery] ...what is the breadth and length and depth and height*"—***of this wonderful plan for YOU, individually! The manifold wisdom of God manifested in your own life!***

Verse 19: "And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge... [not the wisdom of man] ...so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

That is the purpose: ***that we may be filled with all the fullness of God!*** That, in and of itself, is a mystery.

How can we be filled with all the fullness of God? ***It's a mystery hidden from the ages in God!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 3:9, 1-3, 5, 3-4, 6-9
- 2) Mark 4:11-12
- 3) Ephesians 3:10
- 4) I Corinthians 2:6-14
- 5) Ephesians 2:1-6
- 6) John 15:4-5
- 7) Ephesians 2:7, 6-7, 10
- 8) Psalm 138:1, 8
- 9) Psalm 139:1-6,
- 10) Psalm 138:8
- 11) Psalm 139:13-18
- 12) Ephesians 3:11-12, 16-19

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 17
- Ephesians 2:6

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