

## THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

During the month of August, we will study the following three special lessons on the Gospel of Christ (to euaggelion).

- August 5<sup>th</sup>      The Gospel of Kingdom      (Matt.4:23-25)
- **August 19<sup>th</sup>      **The Mystery of the Gospel      (Eph.6:18-20)****
- August 26<sup>th</sup>      A Different gospel      (Gal.1:6-12)

Today's lesson comes from a Pauline Epistle written to develop the Spiritually Advancing Believer's relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the glorious Father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better." (Eph.1:17, NIV)

Our lesson text (Eph.6:18-20) is taken from a larger passage instructing Spiritually Advancing Believers about the spiritual warfare known as the Angelic Conflict (AC). (Eph.6:10-20).

For those unfamiliar with the theology of the Angelic Conflict (AC), a definition of it is: "The AC is a doctrinal term used to describe the spiritual warfare that began in eternity past between Satan and God and has extended to Satan's demonic forces and God's divine agencies in the world (Isa.14:12-15; Rev.12:4-9; 20:10; Job 1:6; 2:1-3; Eph.6:10-17; Matt.16:18)."

"The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8; Col.2:14-15)

We will begin by examining our lesson text that closes the spiritual warfare passage by the following four homiletical points:

- Prayer              (Eph.6:18)              All time in Holy Spirit
- Preaching          (Eph.6:19)              Attitude of boldness (parresia) [never retreat from the battle]
- Persecution        (Eph.6:20a)             Ambassador in chains
- Personal            (Eph.6:20b)             Attitude of fearlessness

Our lesson comes from Paul's personal request for prayer for his ministry: "And pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." (Eph.6:19-20)

**Paul understood the principle of the statement, "Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees."**

<b>This lesson will reveal three aspects of the mystery of the gospel of Christ.</b>
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### 1. The English word mystery is derived from the Greek word musterion.

Musterion is derived from the Greek verb mueo (to be silent). A musterion is a mystery or secret doctrine that was to be kept silent or secret once understood.

It was used in the Greek fraternal orders for sacred secrets known and taught by only those initiated (mustes) into the order that took a vow of silence.

Paul used this term 21 of the 27 references in the NT (1 Cor.4:1-2).

Paul used musterion to explain his Church Age ministry to the Gentiles: “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles – if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 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 in the Spirit.” (Eph.3:1-5)

**2. The fact that Gentiles would be saved in the messianic age was not a mystery (Isa.42:6; 49:6; Acts 13:46-48; Rom.9:24-33; 11:11-13).**

The mystery was that the Gentiles of Birmingham, Alabama would become fellow heirs, fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of the promise of Christ Jesus through the gospel of Jesus Christ (Eph.3:6; Acts 10-11; Eph.2:11-22).

“And might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.” (Eph.2:16)

“A renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.” (Col.3:11)

“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.” (Gal.3:27-29; 1Cor.12:12-13; Matt.3:11; John 14-16) [Parakletos]

**3. The mystery doctrine of the gospel was hidden in biblical Christology (Col.2:2).**

Jesus taught in parables for believing Jews to understand the mystery, but not for the unbelieving Jews (Matt.13:10-17; Mark 4:10-12).

Jesus introduced the subject of “church” with His departure and the coming ministry of the Holy Spirit in the upper room discourse (John 14-17). “As it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the SPIRIT.” (Eph.3:5)

“Of this **church** I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, 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.**” (Col.1:25-27)

**WE HAVE JUST STUDIED ONE OF THE TEN MYSTERY DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH AGE.**