

Prophecy

Part 3

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[00:00:00] Now, will you turn with me tonight, please, first of all to the Book of Acts, chapter 26, and I want to read from verse 13. At midday, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. [00:01:01] But rise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee.

Romans 16, beginning to read from verse 25. Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, [00:02:02] but now is made manifest and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. To God, only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen. Ephesians chapter 3, beginning to read from verse 1. For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if we have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you, how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery. As I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

[00:03:25] That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

Whereof I am made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. [00:04:06] And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hidden God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And lastly, in Colossians chapter 1, beginning to read from verse 24, who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church. [00:05:08] Whereof I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you to fulfil or complete the word of God.

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you.

The hope of glory. That's all I think we'll read tonight. Well now, quite pleasing to see one or two younger faces here tonight. This is always an encouragement to see one or two younger ones here tonight.

[00:06:17] This is our third meeting and when we originally planned these addresses on these evenings in Carlisle, it was the original plan to have five addresses.

Lord's Day evening is an extra one. Five. And when we were thinking over the subjects for these meetings and praying about the right and the best way to put them, I immediately said to myself, Well now, we must make the mystery tonight's subject, we must put that in the middle. We thought it was right and proper to put that one as the central theme of our meetings. [00:07:18] So, we've had a meeting this week to try and find out what this word dispensation means.

And last night we were looking at some prophecies from the Old Testament and we were observing that in many of these prophecies there is an interruption, an interruption, a parenthesis.

And, well, we were seeing that in that parenthesis, which has lasted now for nearly 2,000 years, that God has been calling out a people for his name. [00:08:07] He has been calling out the church of God, the body of Christ, to be the bride of Christ, his companion for all eternity.

Now, in this parenthesis, this interruption in prophecy, that's what God is being doing. That's what he is doing tonight. I'm going to say to you tonight, look, and I address young and old alike, all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ here tonight, all trust in Christ as our Saviour, if we have done that, then we form an integral, vital part of that church, the body of Christ that God is concerned with today.

[00:09:06] I feel very often, I don't know about you, but I feel very often the greatness of a subject like this.

We're not talking about things that even belong to time, or I suppose in one sense they do, but they had their source long before this world began. They were there in the heart of God long before this world as we know it was brought into being. And here you are tonight, young though you might be, old though you might be, having been brought to Christ to trust him as your Saviour and your Lord. You've got a vital and an integral part in that which God purposed in himself before the foundations of the world. [00:10:08] You know, I tell you, my dear Christian friend, thoughts like that stagger, stagger the heart to think that here I am and nobody so far as the world is concerned yet a vital part in that company who are going to assist the Lord Jesus Christ in the day.

He regulates and rules the universe.

You might say, well that's, is that right? Oh yes, the scripture says so. I do trust that before we finish tonight we'll see that. Well now, we're going to talk tonight about this central theme then, the mystery, the mystery. First thing we might ask ourselves the question, whatever does this word mean? [00:11:05] We find it many, many times in the New Testament, mostly by Paul.

It's mostly Paul that uses this word mystery.

You'll find it twice, I think, in the book of Revelation. But apart from that, it's always Paul the Apostle that talks about the mystery. He talks about it in different ways. For instance, in one place he says, in writing to Timothy, he says, great is the mystery of godliness. Great is the mystery of godliness.

God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, and so on. The mystery of godliness. Now, it may help, look, it might help tonight, if we say great is the secret of godliness.

[00:12:12] Now what he means is this. Great is the secret of godly living.

Great is the secret of how to live a godly life. That's what he says when he uses the word mystery in the epistle to Timothy, chapter 3 and verse 15 or 16, is it? 16. Great is the mystery of godliness. Christians know the secret.

Believers know the secret of godliness.

There's nobody here tonight who's a believer but doesn't desire earnestly to live a godly life. If you have a new nature given by God, then you desire to live a godly life. [00:13:07] And Paul tells us what the secret is of a godly life.

Great is the mystery of godliness.

And the secret, of course, is Christ. God manifest in the flesh.

We know God as having been made known in the Son.

In all his love, his mercy, his compassion, his complacent love resting upon us. And this becomes the secret that the believer treasures in his heart as the real power for godliness. That's one way in which the apostle talks about this word mystery. Well now, at least we can gather by this that a mystery is not something which is up in the air in the clouds. [00:14:03] It's not something airy-fairy as we would speak. It's not something mysterious.

But it's this.

It's something that wasn't made known in the ages gone by.

It wasn't made known in the Old Testament days. But is made known today.

It is made known today.

And those who know the secret are those who have the Holy Spirit and the capability of understanding it.

So, a mystery is something which was once hidden. Unknown.

Known to believers.

Known to the initiated, we sometimes say. [00:15:02] Put that simple, shall we? Known to believers who have the Spirit of God dwelling in their hearts. The mystery, something revealed that we know.

Wonderful, isn't it? We were saying the other night, what a wonderful thing it is that God has been pleased to tell us about his secrets. Why should he tell you his secrets? Why should he tell you the secrets of his heart? Well, it's all because of his grace. All because of his grace and his love towards us.

He would want us to know his secrets. Therefore, this word mystery, don't let us just dismiss it tonight as something which is difficult and hard to understand. Let's get to grips with it. Let's get to grips with it tonight. It's something that has been made known, that was once kept secret. [00:16:04] Now, the great mystery that we're going to talk about tonight is the mystery of Christ and the Church. Now, I'll tell you first of all, in the fifth chapter of Ephesians, I didn't read the passage, but it's a well-known passage. This is what he says, what Paul says. Listen to what he says very carefully. This mystery is great, but I speak of Christ and the Church.

Will you observe those words, please? He doesn't say, this mystery is great, I speak of Christ. He doesn't say that. He doesn't say, this mystery is great, but I speak of the Church. He doesn't say that.

He says, this mystery is great, but I speak of Christ and the Church. [00:17:02] That's the mystery. That's the mystery. And we're going to talk tonight, I trust, in some little way, of the wonderful union which God has formed between the members of his body here upon earth and the living head in heaven. I use the word union.

God would desire unity amongst the members of the body down here.

But as far as our relationship to Christ is concerned, it's union. We are united to him in the power of the Spirit into one body, the head in heaven. It is union.

This is the mystery. The mystery is not Christ, nor is it the Church. It's Christ and the Church.

[00:18:04] Let's get that tonight. You'll see, I think, as we go along through our scriptures this evening, this will come to light, I trust, this matter of union between the body and the head. I think, you know, very often I feel that this truth, you know, has been greatly lost sight of by Christendom.

Perhaps the greatness of the Church, the greatness of this divine concept, that there should be those on earth forming one body, a corporate company, a corporate body, united to Christ in heaven with an indissoluble union. This has been lost sight of. And I say, I do say tonight again to every one of us, do give some thought to this. [00:19:06] Consider the greatness of those things to which you have been brought as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. It may be, well, I was once young, and I, perhaps I rejoiced.

I rejoiced that I knew that my sins were all forgiven. I rejoiced, maybe, that I knew I was justified

before God, and I was happy because my sins were gone. These are very wonderful things to know, but you know, God doesn't want us to stay there. God doesn't want us just to stay there in our hearts, but to go on and to make progress, to feed upon the Word of God, and become mature believers, full-grown believers. That's what God wants. [00:20:02] You know, wherever I go these days, somehow I get round to this, I don't know why it is, but I'm impressed with the fact that God is looking for saints who are full-grown, full-grown. You know, of the Apostle, in writing to the Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, Let us go on to full growth. Let us go on to full growth.

God never intended Christians to stay in the baby school all their lives.

God intended believers to make spiritual growth and spiritual progress. Well, he says, let us go on to full growth. Let's be concerned about it. And I think if we were touching this truth tonight of the mystery, we're teaching, we're touching things which perhaps belong in their measure to full growth. [00:21:07] Now then, well now, so much for introduction. Now I read to you tonight a little bit from the conversion of the Apostle Paul. I thought it was right to do this because Paul, or Saul of Tarsus as he was, was the servant, the steward, the vessel that was used of God to bring to light this mystery that we are talking about this evening. Nobody else really told us anything about the mystery apart from the Apostle Paul. And we read about his conversion. Wonderful conversion was that of Saul of Tarsus. And I think it would be right to say that on the night or the day he was converted, on the Damascus road, what he heard and what he saw characterized all that he wrote about afterwards.

[00:22:10] When I first heard that, you know, I was very interested. What he heard and what he saw on the day of his conversion characterized all the things he wrote in his epistles afterwards. Now we read a little bit tonight from chapter 26 of the Acts. It's the account he gave of his conversion to a Gentile audience before Agrippa. Twenty-two, of course, was a Jewish audience. Chapter nine was the actual event itself. Here in chapter 26, he tells his conversion to a Gentile, to Agrippa. And he tells of that day when he was struck down by the light on the road to Damascus, [00:23:04] going along, breathing out slaughterings against the people of God. And you remember the story about how he was struck by the light above the brightness of the sun. And how he heard some words, and what were those words? The words were these, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

That's what he heard. And what did he see? He saw Christ in glory.

He saw Christ in glory.

We have no record of Saul ever having seen the Lord Jesus in his life down here. But one thing we are certain of, he saw him up there. Am I not apostle, he says, in remonstrating with the Corinthians? [00:24:02] Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ, my Lord? Yes, he saw him.

Last of all he was seen of me as one born out of due time. He saw Christ in glory.

I want to suggest to you very, very simply, that what he saw that day characterized him in all he said and all he wrote.

Christ in glory.

That's where the apostle Paul begins. He begins up there with a glorified Christ, the head of the church, the heavenly man, telling us what we've been saying again and again this week, that the

church of God is not earthly, it's heavenly. Paul saw Christ not down here, he saw him up there in heaven. [00:25:02] Now then, what did he hear?

Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

How striking those words are, are they not? The apostle was seeking as hard as he could to stamp out the name of Christ, to exterminate the saints, get rid of them.

But ah, listen, what he was doing, he was touching Christ. It was affecting Christ.

Why persecutest thou me?

The simple truth comes to light, doesn't it? Of that indissoluble link, that indissoluble union with the saints on earth and Christ in glory. I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

[00:26:05] In touching the saints, they were touching him. In persecuting the saints, they were persecuting him. Because of this indissoluble tie between his saints down here and Christ up there.

Now how important that is, isn't it? That's what he heard. So we've got a whole tonight, I trust, of what he saw. He saw Christ in glory, the heavenly Christ.

He learned from the lips of the Lord about this union that we've been talking about. And I repeat again that these things characterized his writing. But there's one other thing I want to draw your attention to in the 26th chapter of Acts, if I may. I just want to refer you to verse 17 for a moment in that chapter. [00:27:03] It's a very, very striking verse. Verse 17 of the 26th chapter of Acts. I'll read it. I think it's very important. Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee.

Now that's a very striking verse. There's more in that verse than meets the eye. Delivering thee from the people, that's the Jews, Paul's people, his countrymen, and from the Gentiles unto whom I now send thee. You might remember on Tuesday night, I gave you the word, the Greek word for church. The word Ecclesia.

You should remember that word. You know it's important. The word Ecclesia.

Well, it was interesting, in this verse, [00:28:01] the Apostle uses that preposition.

He uses that preposition, Ecc.

This is how it goes. Delivering thee out from the people and out from the Gentiles unto whom I now send thee.

How striking that is. The Apostle, in the epistle to the Ephesians, he goes on to talk about something he describes as one new man.

One new man.

Out from the people, out from the Gentiles, one new man.

Here we have in these words of the Apostle, of the Lord, addressed to Paul at the time of his conversion, we have this in seed, shall we say.

[00:29:01] This one new man, neither Jew nor Gentile, one new entity before God.

And this is what God is doing today. Out of the people, out of the Gentiles, to whom I now send thee. This only underlines, doesn't it, the truth of the heavenly character of the Church of God.

Out of.

Do remember that little preposition, won't you? We'll get it again tomorrow night, if the Lord leaves us here tomorrow, we'll get this little preposition again, Ecc. And, well, you'll find it lots of times in the New Testament, worth looking up, you know. Well, here we have it in the 26th chapter of Matthew. Well, I've just drawn your attention to this chapter because I wanted to let you see this matter of Paul's conversion and what took place at his conversion [00:30:02] marked his ministry afterwards. Now then, apart from that, I have read to you the three passages in the New Testament which refer to the mystery.

Romans 16, Ephesians 3, and Colossians 1.

Now then, the mystery.

Well, we've had it, haven't we? Christ and the Church. And, well, in each of these three passages that we have read, it is stated clear as anything can be that it was not made known in Old Testament days as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and his prophets in the power of the Spirit. Every one of these three passages emphasize hidden God, kept secret, hid, now revealed, now revealed.

[00:31:03] Look, let's just analyze for a moment the kind of talk and the kind of teaching that tells us that the Church is a continuation of Israel. Let's just look at it in the light of Scriptures like these. How foreign the idea is to the Word of God. There was no suggestion at all in the Old Testament, not one jot or tittle of light in the Old Testament with regard to the Church of God. It was absolutely new, absolutely new to the present day and age. Nothing said about it in the Old Testament at all. If we as Christians find types in the Old Testament, we only find them there because we look at them in the light of the New Testament. There's nothing revealed of this mystery [00:32:03] in the Old Testament. It's something distinctive.

It's something unique. It's something characteristic of the day in which we live. And I tell you, my brethren, brothers and sisters, if you're Christians tonight, you ought to be vitally concerned with this, which is distinctive Christianity.

So we have the uniqueness, the absolute uniqueness of the Church of God to which we belong, never known before until this day, made known to Paul and also to his holy apostles by the Spirit, things which were hidden in Old Testament days. Don't you think tonight the very expression, head in God, tells me that God had it treasured up, [00:33:02] God had it kept within himself, shall we say, waiting for the moment, the right moment, when the Son of God should come and make it known and complete the Word of God.

We've read a scripture tonight in Colossians with regard to this mystery as fulfilling the Word of God.

Fulfilling the Word of God.

You could use the word complete. It's a better word, I think. Complete the Word of God.

Of course, somebody here tonight might say, oh, well now, I thought the book of Revelation completed the Word of God. Well, it might close the volume of Holy Writ.

It might do that. It happens to be the last book in the New Testament, but it doesn't complete the Word of God, it's Paul's ministry, [00:34:01] the truth of Christ and the Church which completes the Word of God.

All that God has to say, all that God has to say to you and me has now been said in the truth of the mystery, Christ and the Church, the Word of God is complete. There's nothing more to say. No new light.

No, nothing more to say.

God has completed His Word.

That's what it means. Here was the top stone, the top stone, shall we say, in the edifice of divine revelation.

The mystery, Christ and the Church, companion for the Son of God, one with Him in union.

This completed the Word of God.

Well now, perhaps I've said sufficient tonight [00:35:03] to emphasize to you the uniqueness of that which we belong to.

I would like to think that if nothing else transpired from these meetings or this meeting tonight, I would like to think that in some way we went home tonight with some impression of the greatness of those things we've been brought to as Christians. Now I want to say a little bit then about this Church of God tonight, the uniqueness of it, but I want us to look at the third chapter of Ephesians, mainly tonight, and we look at Colossians before we are finished. But I want to have a look at Ephesians 3 first of all, and I'll tell you something interesting about the third chapter of Ephesians, something very interesting, I think it's very interesting. The third chapter of Ephesians, you know, is a parenthesis.

The chapter is a parenthesis.

[00:36:06] And I never cease to be struck by the fact that God brings to light that which is a parenthesis in the ways of God in a chapter which is parenthetical. There it is.

The Church of God is a parenthesis in God's ways. As we saw last night, the prophecy interrupted a parenthesis coming in somewhere.

That parenthesis being the Church of God and this chapter, the third chapter of Ephesians, is in fact a parenthesis.

Now then, I want to look at one verse in particular in this chapter, which tells us about what this mystery really is. The third chapter of Ephesians, just one verse.

God hasn't, shall we say, elevated the Jew or elevated the Gentile. [00:37:03] No, no, no. He's put them both on a new platform entirely. Joint, yes.

Joint body.

Think about it, you know. If you think about it, you think of the enmity which existed between Jew and Gentile. Think of the way God hedged about his people in the Old Testament, made them separate.

As we think of the enmity which existed between them, it's nothing short of a miracle that God could take a Jew and a Gentile and integrally put them together.

Joint heirs, joint body, joint partakers.

That's what he's done. That's what the Apostle is saying here in the third chapter of Ephesians. He's put them on the same platform, same level, no difference.

[00:38:02] In Christ, one new man.

He talks about them here as being joint heirs. A joint body, as we have said, a joint partakers.

Now very, very simply, chapter one talks about the joint heirs. Chapter two talks about the joint body. Very, very sweet, I think. Chapter one, perhaps you remember on Tuesday night, we were reading the happy passage in chapter one, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together all things in Christ, whether they be things in heaven or things in earth, even in him, in whom we also have obtained an inheritance.

Listen to it, can I say it again? In whom we also have obtained an inheritance.

[00:39:05] Did you know you had an inheritance?

Did you know you had an inheritance? That's what God says. You know, believers in the Lord Jesus are not the inheritance.

Believers in the Lord Jesus are the heirs and we have an inheritance in him.

If he is going to take up his authority in the kingdom, the church shall share it with him.

In whom, in whom we also have an inheritance.

Maybe you didn't think you had an inheritance. Maybe you thought you had two pennies to rub together. Well, God says that we have an inheritance.

He also talks about our inheritance.

[00:40:06] Sealed by the Spirit, we've got the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the

purchased possession. Oh yes, we've got an inheritance. And what God has done is, he's given us even today the guarantee, the earnest. This word earnest, you know, has a connotation to an engagement ring.

If a lady gets an engagement ring, it's a guarantee of marriage.

Well, says the apostle, we have the earnest of the inheritance, the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. And then he prays at the end of that chapter, [00:41:02] just one little expression I refer you to in verse 18 to this inheritance. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance.

His inheritance in a sense.

Well, God is going to take up this vast inheritance by putting you and me in possession of it. That's what the verse means. So, we are not the inheritance, we are the heirs, joint heirs with Christ. Heirs of God.

Yes, along with him. Well, joint heirs.

Chapter 1 has to say about the inheritance. Heirs.

Maybe you didn't think or know up to tonight that you had an inheritance. Well, you have. [00:42:01] What is it? It's all things.

Things in heaven and things on earth. We're going to share it all with Christ one day. Wonderful hope, isn't it? Staggering, isn't it? All connected with his own purpose and grace. Given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Now in chapter 2 he speaks about the body. The body of Christ. He talks about the middle wall of partition that came between Jew and Gentile.

Perhaps you remember the little parable in Matthew 21 about the vineyard and how the master of the vineyard sent his son. You remember. He sent his prophets first, then his son. And you know how he was badly treated. Well, you remember too. It says that he hedged it around. He hedged it around.

[00:43:02] You look up any good book you'll find that word hedged is the same word as the apostle uses here in Ephesians 2 the wall of partition. The wall of partition.

And now in Christ that middle wall of partition has been broken down and God has made both one.

Miracle of grace.

Miracle of his purpose. Made both one.

Jew and Gentile.

Think of the enmity which once existed between them. In the cross it's gone. Jew and Gentile. One. One. And it goes on to say, doesn't it, in that passage that having abolished in his flesh the enmity [00:44:01] the law of commandments but to make in himself of the twain Jew and Gentile of the twain

one new man.

Reconciled both in one body by the cross.

We both have access by one spirit unto the Father.

Can you see, my dear friend, tonight what the apostle is driving at here in this very beautiful epistle that God is forming and has been forming in this world this organism.

Not an organization, thank God it's not an organization. It's an organism.

Men have turned it into an organization and it's rotten, ruined.

[00:45:04] Paul in Colossians says we ought to hold the head. Draw from the head what the body needs. Christendom hasn't done that. They haven't done that.

They've organized it so well that the head has been forgotten entirely. He's been replaced by men's organization and men's ideas.

Alas, alas, it's only too true, isn't it?

God has formed this wonderful one body one body unity but united to Christ in heaven.

That's the wonderful truth of the mystery, the mystery. Oh yes, says the apostle, we should be holding the head. All the body needs is in the head. [00:46:01] Just think of your physical body. Think how your head controls your body.

Come off badly without your head, wouldn't you? Well, there it is.

Speaks for itself, doesn't it? If we forget the headship of Christ things are going to go awry down here. The head and the body are one. And I say again tonight how sad it is that this is where Christendom has gone wrong. They've substituted the headship of Christ by earthly heads earthly powers earthly organizations and alas, alas, the unity has been broken on the responsible side.

Well now, one body. How wonderful, isn't it? One body, never known in the Old Testament never even mentioned in the Old Testament. [00:47:03] Sometimes when I've heard brothers and I probably think it quite good they refer sometimes to the 10th of John. Well, OK.

A fold. 10th of John, a fold. F-O-L-D A wall.

A wall in which the sheep are kept. A wall.

Oh says the Lord, other sheep I have which are not of this fold them also I will bring and there shall be one flock.

Your authorized version, by the way, says fold. I trust you will beg my pardon if I say that's not a good translation. Any other translation, any translation puts that right.

Even modern translations [00:48:02] if you're an enthusiast of the RSV or any of these NIV take your pick.

They all put that right at any rate. They say flock and not fold. It's not a fold any longer. It's a flock held by the affections to Christ the shepherd.

Gentiles and Jews together in one flock. Not a fold.

The fold has been dispensed with. The middle wall of partition has been broken down. The hedge has been broken down. There's no longer a middle wall of partition. No longer the fold but the flock.

Well now, you know, that was never known quite as that in that way in the Old Testament. But I'll tell you something about it. There always was a flock in the Old Testament. There always was a flock in the Old Testament. [00:49:04] And that flock of course was Israel. That's what David had in mind, the sweet psalmist when he sung those lovely words the Lord is my shepherd, Jehovah is my shepherd. Oh yes, Israel was God's flock.

But Gentiles had nothing to do with that.

Now I'll tell you something more. There might have been a flock in the Old Testament. There's one thing certain. There was no thought of one body in the Old Testament. No thought of one body.

That's absolutely new.

Completely unique to Christianity.

A body united to the head in heaven.

You know, I don't know how you'll take these things that we are saying tonight. [00:50:01] But all I've got to say, and I'll say it again. I don't care if I repeat it again. But what we are talking about tonight is Christianity. It is honestly, it's genuine, real Christianity. And I think very often we forgot about it. We've forgotten about it. Now the apostle in Colossians, just a word in Colossians before I close tonight. In Colossians he says a little bit more about this mystery. In Colossians 1.

I only refer to one little point, if I may. In verse 27 of the first chapter of Colossians this is what the apostle says. Talking about the mystery again. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles.

Which is, which is Christ in you [00:51:06] the hope of glory.

Gentiles, mark my words, Gentiles.

Strangers from the commonwealth of Israel. Without hope.

They didn't have the covenants and the promises and the glory. Gentiles.

Christ in you.

Sometimes when I was younger I used to hear brethren say in the epistle to the Ephesians it's we in Christ.

In Colossians it's Christ in us. I think that's right. Happy little distinction. Remember it. Ephesians, what we are in Christ. Colossians, Christ in us.

And here we've got the body again. We're back to the thought of the mystery. Christ in the church. The body of Christ. United to Christ.

Christ in you.

[00:52:02] Christ in you.

Let's close tonight on this little thought, shall we? If there is that in this world tonight and there is, thank God, in spite of all the failure the body of Christ exists upon earth tonight. And that body is the vessel I can't think of a better word. I'm sorry. It's the vessel through which the life of the head is lived.

The body is here to show forth the character and the moral features of the head.

In other words you might say, well now yes, the life of the Lord Jesus Christ was a lovely life, wasn't it? 33 years of moral beauty.

[00:53:03] Oh, how charming it was, wasn't it?

And then he died on the cross. They crucified him. Was that the end of that life? Was that the end of that life?

Listen, my friend. God has triumphed.

God has triumphed.

He's produced thousands and thousands of believers forming part of this one body. And for 1987 years there has been an expression of Christ in this world. God has triumphed.

Oh yes, he's triumphed. He's continued the life of Christ in his members here upon earth.

Isn't that wonderful? God has triumphed. God wasn't defeated, dear friend, at the cross. God wasn't defeated when Christ was crucified.

[00:54:01] Oh no, redemption brought to light thousands and millions who formed the body of Christ in which all the beauty of Christ is to be seen.

Well, Christ in you the hope of glory.

That's what the apostle goes on to say, remember in chapter 3 of Colossians Put on therefore as the elect of God holy and beloved bowels of mercies and compassions love and meekness and humility all the features that came out in Christ. The body is here in order that the head might live through it

his life.

Well, I haven't got anything more to say than that. I trust that what I have said is will give us some little inkling feeble though it might be of the greatness [00:55:01] the greatness of the mystery the riches of the glory of the mystery riches with your tremendous wealth Christ in you the hope of glory.