

Walking on Water Part 7

The Mystery Revealed, The Restoration of Humanity

Last week I wanted to develop a case for the authority of Christ. How He was given all authority on earth and in the heavens by God, the Creator of the universe, although we should also know that Jesus was with God when the universe was created. In fact, scripture says that all things were created by Him, for Him and all things in the history of the heavens and earth will be summed up in Him.

This morning we are going to look at the mystery of the world which was revealed in and through Christ.

Let's begin by looking at our passage found in **“For He has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of His will, according to His purpose which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Him, according to the purpose of Him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of His will, we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of His glory.” (Ephesians 1:9-12 RSV)**

Let's pray

In preparation for this sermon I read through Ecclesiastes, the writings of Solomon, the son of David. Here's what he had to say about life and the pursuit of knowledge.

Ecclesiastes 8:16-17, “When I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task which has been done on the earth...and I saw every work of God, I concluded that man cannot discover the work which has been done under the sun. Even though man should seek laboriously, he will not discover and though the wise man should say, “I know,” he cannot discover.”

Solomon was an interesting guy. The amount of wisdom he was given was unparalleled in his life. He asked God for wisdom over riches and power and God blessed him with it. But in all the wisdom Solomon God still did not provide him with the answers to life.

I read through a few other philosophers about life. Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, Fisher and **Andre Maurois** who said, **“The universe is indifferent. Who created it? Why are we here upon this puny mud heap, spinning in infinite space? I have not the slightest idea, and I am quite convinced no one else has the last idea.”**

That is where philosophizing and speculating about what life is all about separate of God will get you. Right where you started, without any answers.

But I have good news this morning. We live in an age where you don't need to philosophize about life. God has all the answers and He has freely shared it with those who seek it.

Look back at the first part of our scripture from Ephesians. **“For He has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of His will, according to His purpose which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth.”**

Here we see Paul tells us several things relating to the purpose of God and what is happening on earth today. I believe it is imperative for us to understand the mystery of His will for all of humanity if we are going to develop our faith and trust in God in such a way that we become overcomers of this life. Men and women who have the ability to walk on water over the challenges and temptations that are part of our life's journey.

- 1. The secret itself, "the mystery of His will," the hidden purposes of God, He has made known to us.**

You notice that Paul describes the purposes of God as a mystery. A mystery as stated here is a secret which only God understands, and which Christians desperately need to know, but about which they can never find out except through the revelation of God.

In 1 Corinthians 4:1b, “as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.” Paul reminds us that we Christians have been made stewards of the mysteries of God, dispensers of them.

It is up to us to grasp them, understand them, and speak out about them. What is wrong in the world of our day is the fact that the church has not been speaking about the mysteries which are theirs to know and, therefore, the world is thrown into confusion and darkness.

What are these mysteries?

2. The summing up of all things in Christ

This is the first mystery God is sharing with His people. He is working to unite all things in Christ.

When Paul says all things he does mean all things. Things in the invisible realm we mentioned last week, things on the earth, the struggles between nations and the struggles between individuals. All these things will cease and will be united together under Christ.

Remember our scripture from Philippians we read last week?

“God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,” (Philippians 2:9-11 RSV).

That is what God is moving too. That is what He is doing in this time in which we live. He is moving to sum up all things in His Son Jesus.

You and I know that it doesn't look that way, does it? The world we are living in is a divided world, and it is becoming more and more evident all the time. Agree with what our President is doing or not old alliances between nations are crumbling. The news we hear and watch is full of the divisions that are happening all across the world and all around us.

Struggle, strife and division are taking place on every side. And the truth is also each one of us is a walking civil war too aren't we? We fight within ourselves. We want to do good always but we also find ourselves wanting to do exactly the opposite.

Now, the great thought which Paul shares with us in this passage is that Jesus has come to stop all that. He has come to heal that division, to end it, to heal the broken relationships, to end the strife, to stop the angry, hateful words that people say to one another.

He has already started. When He was on earth He began healing, binding up, bringing all the divisions to a close. He came as a healing force into the world to mend all the damage and bind up all the broken hearts. Paul makes a point of that. He says that the way this great fact was made known to us is by the life of Jesus.

3. The way things in this life are healed is through Jesus

As we look at the life of Jesus and how He handled Himself in each and every circumstance, we begin to understand the mystery. Think about what Isaiah predicted Jesus would do.

“The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame man shall leap like a deer, the tongue of the dumb shall sing for joy, and there will be healing appearing in nature on every side.” (Isaiah 35:5-7) paraphrase

And that is what happened when Jesus came. He began to heal. He opened blind eyes and touched lame men and made them well. He mastered nature, stilled the storm, walked on water, changed water into wine. He mastered these forces. He delivered the oppressed from the realm of Satan. He set people free, He liberated them, and healed the hurt of their life.

This was the visible demonstration that the end result of His work, which He began then, would finally and ultimately be seen everywhere. So you see it in his works.

Now listen carefully:

4. The principles by which healing would take place in people's spirits, as well as their bodies, are found in Jesus' words.

That is why it is so important to read and study the words of Jesus. Have you ever really seriously studied the words of Jesus?

Take the Beatitudes, for instance: "**Blessed, [happy], Jesus said, 'are the poor in spirit,' Matthew 5:3.**

Do you ever feel that way? When you get poor, impoverished, in spirit, when you feel as if you have nothing left, feel that you have been drained dry and have no riches of spirit remaining to you at all -- are you happy? Do you go around rejoicing and singing, "Oh, how great it is that I'm so poor in spirit!"? No. We say we're depressed, and oftentimes we react with bitterness.

But listen! Jesus says that is a golden moment. "**Blessed [happy] are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,**" (Matthew 5:3 RSV). At that point, at that place, you are in a position to receive riches from a different source and by a different process than you could get at any other place, any other point of your life.

There you are more likely to receive them, nowhere else. **"Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted," (Matthew 5:4).** Do you ever think of yourself that way? Are you happy when you're sad? It sounds almost contradictory, doesn't it?

But Jesus said that you are happy when you are mourning. Why? Well, because then you can learn about a source of comfort which is otherwise so incredible, so beyond human experience that no human being can give it to you. But you can have it at that point, and at no other place.

Brother Mark pictures

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," (Matthew 5:4 RSV).

Jesus goes on saying these radical, transforming things. And we listen to them and recite them and say that they are wonderful words, but we never take them seriously. Yet that is what Paul is talking about, these healing, unifying principles revealed in Christ which will transform lives.

The real question is, do you try and live by those principles?

This is part of the mystery of Christ. The mystery of being in and having all things summed up in Christ.

In the midst of our pain, in the midst of our suffering, we can call out to Him and what we thought was a tragedy becomes a miracle in Christ.

But I do want to say that only crying out to Him in prayer is not always enough. There is more.

Look at our next passage.

Matthew 11:28-29, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn

from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Do you see the:

5. Action words: Come to Jesus, learn from Jesus, take from Jesus.

How do we come, learn and take from Jesus? A lot of times Christians think it is just as we come to prayer or do some general Bible reading. And while those two things are great there is another thing we can do as well.

Hebrews 3:1, “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.”

Hebrews 12:3, “For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

Here is where some of the mystery comes to light. Here is where we can see Jesus working in our lives in powerful and incredible way.

6. Consider Jesus. Think on Him. Not just what He teaches but upon the Man, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Christ.

When things get tough and it seems like your prayers are not being heard. Or even when praying is hard. Ever have times like that? Or when the latest spiritual book is not speaking to you...

Think on Jesus and you will begin to see Him working in your life. How do you do this? Well, take a portion of scripture like the one being handed out and carry it with you. Think on it but more than that, consider Jesus. Think on Him.

Philippians 2:5b-8, “...Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but ^lemptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Walking on Water is not rocket science but it is more powerful than rocket science. Thinking upon Jesus activates His Spirit in such a way that what He said in Matthew becomes a reality.

You will find rest for your souls. The battles you are facing in life, with people and even within yourself will end as you think upon Jesus.

Its not magical, it is not mystical, it's not even a mystery anymore, it is the Christ; it is the power of the Son of God working in your life.

We have the great opportunity to be a church of overcomers. We have the great opportunity to understand and activate the mystery of the Son of God in our lives. We have the great opportunity to be a witness to the world around and help them connect to the powerful work of Jesus in their lives.

This is where we want to be amen?

Let's pray.