

# Mystery of Christ:the Church

by Stephen Kaung

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*The mystery of God is Christ, and the mystery of Christ is the Church, which is the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, and the kingdom of God.*

**Duration:** 1:17:10

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 4:1, Ephesians 3:1-12, Ephesians 3:16, Ephesians 3:20-21

**Topics:** "Church Of God", "Mystery Of Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by praying for God to open His word to the listeners and make it alive in their lives. The main verse discussed is 1 Corinthians 4:1, which emphasizes the importance of viewing ourselves as servants and stewards of Christ and the mysteries of God. The speaker then moves on to Ephesians 3:1-12, where Paul talks about the administration of God's grace and the revelation of the mystery of Christ. The sermon highlights the privilege and responsibility of being stewards of God's secret, which has been hidden for ages but is now revealed to believers. The church is described as the house of God, the bride of Christ, and the warrior in Ephesians.

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## Transcript

This is Monday morning, May the 8th, 1972. Ministry given through Brother Stephen Kong in Richmond, Virginia. Our Heavenly Father, this is the prayer of our hearts.

That thou will cause us to come to thine own river. And thou will cause us to drink of thy river. And thou will cause us to live by thy river.

O how we praise and thank thee. There is life, life abundant, that comes from the throne of God and of the land. How we praise and thank thee that we may come to thee.

We may drink of thee and we may live by thee. This morning we do come together once again to drink of thee. We pray that thou will open thy word to us.

Make thy word living and operative in our lives. Give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation. That we may know thee in a real way.

And in knowing thee we may be filled with thyself. Lord we do commit ourselves and this hour into thy hands. Trusting thee to break thy word to us.

In the name of our Lord Jesus. The one verse that we would like to fellowship this time is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 1. So let's read it again. 1 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 1. Let a man so account of us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Ephesians chapter 3. We'll read from verse 1 through verse 12. Ephesians chapter 3 verse 1. For this reason I, Paul, prisoner of the Christ Jesus for your nations, if indeed ye have heard of the administration of the grace of God which has been given to me towards you, that by revelation the mystery has been made known to me, according as I have written before briefly, by which in reading it ye can understand my intelligence. In the mystery of the Christ, which in other generations has not been made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the power of the Spirit, that they who are of the nations should be joint heirs and a joint body and joint partakers of his promise in Christ Jesus by the glad tidings, of which I am become minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given to me, according to the working of his power, to me less than the least of all things, has this grace been given, to announce among the nations the glad tidings of the unsearchable riches of the Christ, and to enlighten all with the knowledge of what is the administration of the mystery hidden throughout the ages in God, who has created all things, in order that now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies might be made known through the church, the assembly, the all various wisdom of God, according to the purpose of the ages, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and assets, in confidence by the faith of him.

Colossians chapter 1. Colossians chapter 1 we will read from verse 24 through verse 29. Now I rejoice in sufferings for you, and I feel of that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ in my flesh, for his body which is the assembly, the church. Of which I became minister according to the dispensation of God, which is given me towards you to complete the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, and has now been made manifest to his saints, to whom God will make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Whom we announce admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, to the end that we may present every man perfect in Christ, whereunto also I toil, combating according to his working, which works in me in power. And the last place is in 1 Corinthians chapter 2. 1 Corinthians chapter 2 we will read from verse 6. Through verse 16. That we speak wisdom among the perfect, but wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who come to naught.

But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, that hidden wisdom which God has predetermined before the ages for our glory, which none of the princes of this age knew, for had they known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, according as it is written, things which eye has not seen, and ear not heard, and which have not come into man's heart, which God has prepared for them that love him, that God has revealed to us by his Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

For all of man hath known the things of the man except the Spirit of the man which is in him. Thus also the things of God knows no one except the Spirit of God. For we have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which have been freely given to us of God.

Which also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, communicating spiritual things by spiritual means. For the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned. But the spiritual discerns all things, and he is discerned of no one.

For who has known the mind of the Lord? Who shall instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. We are stewards of the mysteries of God. We are not owners, we are managers.

God has entrusted his secret to us, and we are to manage the secret faithfully and wisely. I think this is the greatest privilege, and the greatest responsibility we have before God. Just think for a moment.

God has revealed his secret to us. Something that has been hidden in God for ages and for generations. Something that he has been working towards all the time, and yet he has never made known that secret to man.

And now by his Spirit he has revealed that secret to us, who are the least of all the saints. As Paul said, less than the least of all the saints. That's what we are.

And yet God has revealed his mystery, his secret, that which is in his mind, in his heart, for centuries to us. And having received that secret, we have become stewards. We are not only to keep that secret, but we are to manage that secret in all faithfulness, in all wisdom.

Brothers and sisters, to me I feel this is one of the greatest things that can happen to us. The mysteries of God. And of course, that mystery is so tremendous that Paul has to use the plural number, the mysteries of God.

It is not that there are many mysteries. There is only one. God has only one secret.

But that secret is so tremendous that it covers such a tremendous ground. There are so many facets to it. And that is the reason why it is called the mysteries of God.

Now last night we began with a mystery in that special term. The mystery in singular number. The mystery of God.

Now the mystery of God, as we mentioned last night, is Christ. God has only one secret. And His secret is His Son.

If we know Christ, we know God. If we do not know Christ, God remains a mystery to us. The mystery of God's will is in His Son.

He wants His Son to be the head of all things. All things will be gathered together in Him. And that is God's mystery.

Now we will not go back and go over again because we did that last night. Now this morning we want to go on with a mystery that we find in God's Word. The mystery of God is Christ.

And the mystery of Christ is the Church. That you find in these passages that we have read this morning. Whether it is in Ephesians chapter 3. Whether it is in Colossians chapter 1. Or it is in 1 Corinthians chapter 2. You find Paul is mentioning a mystery.

And this mystery is called the mystery of the Christ. Now what is the mystery of the Christ? And after you have read these passages you know it is the Church. You know when Christ was on earth He was really a mystery to the people of His days.

He lived among them. He moved among them. And yet He was a great puzzle to all of them.

They just couldn't figure Him out. As you read the record you find in the four Gospels you find time and again people will say, well, we know His parents. We know His brothers and His sisters.

And we know Him. We know He is a carpenter. We know that He lives among us.

But where comes His wisdom? He has never gone to school. We know that. But how can He teach like that? We know that He is one of us.

And yet how can He say that He is from heaven? And at other times you'll find the scribes and the Pharisees say we do not know where He comes from. We know Moses but we do not know Him. We don't know.

Sometimes people try to lay hands on Him and yet somehow they couldn't do that. And even those officers that were sent to take Him they came back and said no man has ever talked like Him. We couldn't lay our hands on Him.

Throughout the life of our Lord Jesus He was a mystery. In the very beginning you'll find the Pharisees and the Council they seem to be favorable in a sense to Christ. Why? Because they thought He might be the Messiah.

He might be. He might be the one who will fulfill all their aspirations. They watched very carefully and they found that He was so different from their idea of the Messiah.

He just didn't fit in with their concept. They thought that when the Messiah should come then He would revive the nation of Israel and He would help them through all the yoke of the Roman Empire and to make Israel the first of the nations. And yet He didn't do that.

So finally they rejected Him. In the very beginning you'll find the Jewish people flocked to Him. Wherever He went He gathered great multitudes.

They followed Him. Why? Because they wanted Him to be their King. He could feed them with five loaves and two fishes.

But gradually they discovered His words were too hard. They just couldn't take Him. So they left Him.

They not only left Him but finally they rejected Him. They said crucify Him. Crucify Him.

We will have nothing to do. He was a mystery and unknown to the people of His time. Not even with His disciples.

Those who were supposed to know Him. He was still a mystery to them too. Time again you'll find they misunderstood Him completely.

They just couldn't understand Him. Even to the very end you'll find they did not understand Him. After He was resurrected you'll remember that day He walked with two disciples on the way to Emmaus.

And these two disciples they were talking. And the Lord went in with them and said, now what are you talking about? And He said, you must be a stranger in Jerusalem. Don't you know that what is the news that everybody is talking about? The Lord said, what is it? And they said, well there is a man Jesus in whom we have hope.

He is the hope of Israel. But something happened. He was crucified.

He died. Our hope was dashed to pieces. But then some woman said, He is risen from the dead.

We just don't know what He is all about. Now these were disciples of our Lord Jesus. And even to these disciples the Lord was a mystery to them.

They just couldn't figure Him out. They just didn't understand Him. Brothers and sisters, you know, Christ is a mystery.

He will remain a mystery if we do not see Him. It may sound strange to your ears now. But let me illustrate it.

In Matthew chapter 16 you find that the Lord said, now who do men say, I am? And all these people have different things to say. And some say that He is Elias. He is Jeremiah.

Or He is John the Baptist that comes back to life. Or He is one of the prophets. In other words, they saw what He did.

They heard what He spoke. They watched His manner. His compassion.

And they saw all these things so that He must be this one or He must be that one because He has done this and He has said that and He has expressed in this way. So you find people give all kinds of judgment about the Lord Jesus. And the Lord said, now whom do you say that I am? You who are My disciples.

You who are supposed to be those who know Me. And you remember Peter? Through the revelation of the Father, he said, Lord, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Peter knew Christ.

But immediately after he said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God, you know what did Christ do to him? Christ said, Blessed are you, son of Jonah. Because this is not something revealed to you by man. But it is My Heavenly Father who has revealed the Son to you.

Now I am going to reveal something more to you. You are Peter. I will build My church upon this rock.

And the gates of Hades shall not prevail. When the Father revealed the Son to Peter, the Son immediately revealed the church. Why? Because the Son is the mystery of God.

And the church is the mystery of Christ. When you know the Son, you know the Father. But unless you know the church, you do not know Christ in His fullness.

You may know Christ in certain way. But if you want to know the full meaning of Christ, you have to know the church. I will build My church upon this rock.

And the gates of Hades shall not prevail. Another example. Here was a man by the name of Saul.

He was brought up in Judaism. In a sense, he was the representative, the typical man in Judaism. The best.

The best specimen of Judaism. He loved God. He knew the prophets and the law.

So far as the righteousness according to the law was concerned, he was perfect. But he just couldn't understand Christ. He couldn't.

He thought Christ was an imposter. So he persecuted the Christians, the believers. By doing that, he thought he was serving God.

He was doing a good service to God with all sincerity and honesty. But on the way to Damascus, the Lord appeared to him. The Lord met him on the way of Damascus.

And the first question you remember Saul asked was, Lord, who are you? I don't know you. Who are you? And the Lord said, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? Why do you persecute Me? I'm Jesus, whom thou persecutest. Brothers and sisters, how did Saul come to know Christ? He came to know Christ by his church.

He was persecuting the believers. He was persecuting the members of the body. And the head complained in heaven and said, why did you touch Me? In other words, he knew the Lord through the church.

He immediately saw that touching the believers he touched the head. Because the head and the body are one. And from that time on you will find he received further revelation concerning the mystery of the Christ.

And he became one who really knew the mystery of the Christ which is the church. Why is it that the mystery of the Christ is the church? Why? First, Christ will remain a mystery to us if we do not see the reason why He came to this world. Why did the Son of God come to this world? Why did He die on the cross? Why did He accomplish the work of redemption? For if we do not see the church we will never be able to know fully the meaning of Christ.

You know, sometimes we know Christ in a personal way. And thank God for that. We should.

Sometimes we say now He is Christ. Why? Because He is my Savior. He has died on the cross for me.

For my sin. And this is correct. Thank God for that.

And sometimes we say now Christ came to the world that He may give me life. And even more life. Life more abundantly.

And this is also correct. And thank God for that. Sometimes we think of Christ as our shepherd.

And how He guides our way. How He protects us. How He takes care of us.

And thank God that is true. And sometimes we think of Christ as our friend. A friend in need.

He is indeed our friend. He knows us. Thank God for that.

We come to know Christ in His many and various aspects. But brothers and sisters, if you want to know the full meaning of Christ, you have to see something. Something bigger than personal or individual.

There is a place for the personal and the individual. But you have to have your vision enlarged. And to see something far bigger.

In other words, Christ has come. He includes you. He includes me.

But, you are not the whole meaning. I am not the whole purpose. You know, sometimes, And that is very true.

So far as our experience goes. You know, sometimes we say now, it is as if Christ just loves me. And He dies on the cross just for me.

And you know, anyone, everyone who has experienced the love of Christ will say it in this way. As if Christ comes to the world just for you. And nobody else.

And thank God, this is very true. But you know, in one sense, you are very precious to Him. That's true.

As if you are the only one. And He treats you like that. But in another sense, you are not that important.

He has something far bigger in view. Why does Christ come to this world? What is the meaning of the cross? Why does He give Himself up in this way? And you find the Bible says, Christ loved the church and gave Himself. You know, the whole book, Gospel of John, has a viewpoint.

And the viewpoint is, the one who comes to this world is a bridegroom. He is looking for His bride. That is the whole viewpoint of the Book of John.

And that is the reason why you find this marriage feast of Cana there in the Gospel of John. Christ came to this world as a bridegroom. He was seeking for His bride.

But the thing is, the bride was not there. He had to form that bride. He had to make that bride.

He had to gather that bride so that He might have her for Himself. He came to seek and to find the lost. For what purpose? That He may gather unto Himself a people.

That will become His bride. And that is the whole outlook in the Gospel of John. Brothers and sisters, Christ is for the church.

And this is the meaning of Christ. He is for. Not just for you and for me, but for the church.

You and I are included, becomes part in that church, in that bride, or in that body, or in that kingdom. Now, whatever way you may put it. Peter will put it, Christ is the King.

And He comes to build His kingdom on earth. Paul will put it, Christ is the head. He is finding His body.

He is building His body. And John will put it, Christ is the bridegroom. He is seeking His bride.

Now, in whatever way you may put it, you find it is the culprit that is always in view. Not just individuals. He is not just saving you and me as individuals.

He is saving you and me to make up a body. To make up a kingdom and to make up the bride. And thank God we are included.

And unless we can see it in this way, you cannot explain. You cannot. Then secondly, you find that Christ is not only for the church.

He is in the church. You know, very often when we read 1 Corinthians, come to chapter 2. You know, this is one verse that has been used very much. We often use that word and say, now I know nothing but

Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

And sometimes we boast of it. And literally say, I know nothing. I only know Christ crucified.

That's all I know. Brothers and sisters, if you read the context, you know that this is not really what Paul means. Paul said, when I come into your midst, that is when he came to Corinth, knowing the situation in Corinth, he said he was determined to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Now, not that Paul did not know anything more. But judging their situation, he determined, he was determined to know nothing. But Christ crucified.

Why? Because that was what they needed. They lived in the flesh. They boasted of their own cleverness and wisdom.

And so forth. And what they needed was the cross of our Lord Jesus. They needed to see Christ crucified.

That was the message to them. But brothers and sisters, immediately after he mentioned that, in the second part of 1 Corinthians chapter 2 he said, but among the perfect, we also speak of wisdom. The Corinthian people, they talk about wisdom.

They sought after wisdom. The wisdom of this world. And that made them very big heads.

They thought that they were somebody. So Paul said, no. I know nothing among you but Christ Jesus and Him crucified.

You have to see the cross. Christ crucified on the cross. You have to be reduced to zero.

But Paul said, after you know Christ crucified, after the foundation truth has been received, then you can build on the foundation. And the build-up truth is God's mystery. God's wisdom in a mystery.

Sometimes you hear people boast and say, I know nothing of Christ crucified. And they really know nothing more. That's not Paul's attitude.

On the one hand, when you come to the foundation truth, there is nothing but Christ crucified. That's true. We should preach nothing but Christ crucified.

But among the perfect. Now, who are the perfect? In the Bible, the perfect does not mean seamless perfection. Does not mean people whom we would think they are perfect.

In other words, they are just perfect. There is nothing wrong or nothing less anymore. No.

The meaning of the perfect in the Bible here is in contrast with the babes. To the babes, we know nothing but Christ crucified. Why? Because that brings them into birth.

That makes them babes in Christ. That gives them life. But when the babes grow, they are more matured, then they need the build-up truth upon that foundation.

And the build-up truth is God's wisdom in a mystery. So the perfect here means the matured ones. Those who are growing in the grace of God.

Those who have left their babyhood. Those who are going on with the Lord. On the basis of Christ crucified.

On the foundation of the cross. There you will find, you begin to see God's purpose of Christ coming to this world. God's purpose of Christ crucified on the cross.

The meaning of Christ and the meaning of the cross begin to be revealed. And that is God's wisdom in a mystery. Why is it called a mystery? Because it is something hidden.

There is a time for its revelation. To the Corinthian believers, Paul was not able to reveal that mystery to them. Paul would like very much to share with them God's wisdom in a mystery.

Because that mystery had already been revealed to Paul. And he would like very much to fellowship with them on this point. But he couldn't.

He couldn't. Why? Because they were still babes. They were still babes.

They needed the cross working their lives deeper before they would be able to appreciate God's wisdom. Before they were able to see God's purpose of the cross of Christ. So brothers and sisters, Paul said, among the perfect, we talk about God's wisdom in a mystery.

And he tried to describe that wisdom in a mystery. He said it was something that ears have never heard. Eyes have never seen.

And it has never come into human mind. It is something completely hidden. It concerns our glory.

It has to be revealed by the Spirit of God because it is the depths of God. And who knows the depths of God but the Spirit of God. It has to be revealed and it has to be interpreted, explained with spiritual words.

It is the mind of Christ. Now, after he has given so much description, he did not come out and say what it is. Why? Because they were not ready for it.

They were not ready to know God's wisdom in a mystery. They were not ready to receive the mystery of Christ. And this had to wait until he wrote the letter to the Ephesians.

Now, if you read the letter to the Ephesians and compare 1 Corinthians 2 with Ephesians 3, you will find the description of that mystery were almost similar. You will have similar descriptions of mystery, hidden, revealed, our glory, all these things. You will find a parallel between these two passages of the promise of God.

And he said it is through the church that the wisdom of God is made known even to principalities and authorities. That is, to the angels. So, brothers and sisters, here you will find the mystery of Christ is that you do not see the church unless, first, you allow the cross to work in your life.

So, somebody said, if you preach the cross, you get the church. But if you preach the church, you get the cross. You know? If you preach the cross of the Lord Jesus and really let the cross work in you, then you will be delivered from individualism, you will be delivered from the self-centered life, you will be delivered from the flesh, and then you will be brought into God's purpose.

And you will see that you are part of God's purpose. You are a member of the body of Christ. And how you are related to Christ, and you are related to one another.

But if you preach the church, in other words, you tell people that you belong to the church, you belong to the body, you are a member. And if the cross hasn't worked in your life yet, you will discover the cross will begin to work. Why? Because without the cross, the foundation, you cannot have the superscription.

The cross has to work in your lives in order to make the church a reality to you. The church is not something just to appreciate, just to admire. The church is a reality.

It is the mystery of Christ. In other words, Christ is in the church. What is the church? The church is Christ in his corporate expression.

That is the church. And because Christ has put himself in the church, not only put himself in the church, but the church is Christ in his corporate expression. Therefore, anything that is not of Christ in us has to be dealt with by the cross.

That's why when you preach the church, you get the cross. And by this way, you will really enter into the real meaning of the church. Then thirdly, the church is the mystery of Christ.

Why? Because Christ is known by the church. How are you going to know Christ? If you try to know Christ individually, you will find there is a great limitation there. Why? Because our capacity is limited.

By the grace of God, you may know Christ to a certain degree. But that's all. That's all you can know.

Some may know Christ as their savior. Others may know Christ as their healer. Others may know Christ as their counselor or their comforter.

Now, in our personal experience, we can know Christ to a certain degree, each individual. But it takes the whole church to make Christ known. Therefore, you'll find Ephesians chapter 3, with all the saints, we apprehend the width, the breadth, the length, the height and the depth of the love of Christ which surpasses.

Christ is known by the church. That is the reason why we need to fellowship one with another. We need to share with one another the Christ that we know.

And by sharing the Christ that we know, we are able to apprehend and be filled with the fullness. That's the reason why we need one another. Brothers and sisters, how we thank God for all the brothers and sisters.

Because it is through all the brothers and sisters that we come to know Christ. Christ is known by the church. Not only among ourselves, that is among God's people.

But Christ is known by the church to this world. You remember the Lord said, if you love one another, then the world will know that God has sent Him. Our personal testimony, witnessing to the world, is important.

But you'll find there is a greater power in our testimony to this world. And that is seen in the church. In the early days of Christianity, you'll find people will point to these believers and say, see how they love one another.

And because of that, many came. This does not mean that we should shun our personal witnessing or responsibility. Not at all.

We should. We should, each individual, we should witness for the Lord. That is true.

But brothers and sisters, when there is a body on earth, when there is a candlestick of gold on earth, when there is this church on earth, you'll find the light will shine far and wide. The testimony will be strong and effective. The reason why today our testimony is so weak is because God's people are so divided.

There is not that one candlestick. There is not that love for one another. That is to say, brotherly love.

In other words, we love one another for one reason. We are brothers. There is no other reason for that love.

And if we can all love one another because we are brothers, now this is the love of God. And the world will immediately see that God has sent Christ to this world. So you see, Christ is made known not just by one or two individuals.

And also, Christ is made known by the church to the principalities and authorities. You know, the testimony of the church reaches far beyond just this material, physical world. Our testimony touches the spiritual world.

Even the principalities and authorities come to learn the wisdom of God through the church. And of course, this can be explained in two different ways. When you think of these angels, principalities and authorities as good angels, shall we say, as angels who are serving God, then you find, Peter said, even the angels are very anxious to learn, to see what God is doing.

Here God raises up men who are made little lower than angels. And through these men who are lower than angels, because God is to use them to accomplish God's plan. The angels rejoice in seeing what God is doing today in the church.

The angels begin to see the wisdom of God. And they praise God. They sing praises to God because of the church.

And of course, to the principalities, authorities and the power of darkness and the spirit of wickedness. They are destroyed by Christ and his church. Satan was defeated by Christ in person on the cross.

And now, the whole power of darkness is to be destroyed by the church. It is through the church that the enemy of God is to be brought to his end. And brothers and sisters, this is the way that you'll find the church will even teach the angels the wisdom of God.

And not only teach the angels, but Paul said, don't you know that you will judge the angels? We will judge the angels because we are made heirs and co-heirs with Christ. God has not given the habitable world to the angels, but he has given to the seed of Abraham. So brothers and sisters, you'll find in these three aspects, you can see how the mystery of Christ is the church.

Christ is for the church. Christ is in the church. And Christ is known by the church.

And through the church, the mystery of Christ is known. No one knows the Father, but when you know the Son, you know the Father. No one really knows Christ, but when you know the church, you know Christ.

What is the church? Very briefly, in the whole letter of Ephesians, you'll find Paul is trying to show us what the church is. What is the church? Now today, the word church may not mean much to people. Even to Christians, the word church may not mean too much.

But if you really know what the church is, if you really see what the church is, then you'll find the mystery of Christ is all there. It is in the church that you know Christ. Why? Because first, you'll find Paul in Ephesians chapter 1 said, he is head over all things to the church.

Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all and in all. Now what is the church? The church is the body of Christ. Christ, the head.

He is to fill the body with himself. Everything in the body speaks of himself. He is all and in all.

Now that is the church. What is the church? The church is Christ himself. That expressed in a corporate way.

That's the church. The body. Think of the body of Christ.

A body. The scripture does not use a corpse. A body.

Because there is life in it. It is not a corpse. It is not a form.

It is not something of the past. It is a living body. It is in the present.

It is Christ himself that fills all and in all. Not only the church is the body that contains Christ in all his fullness. And we thank God for that.

It is not a little bit of Christ. And a great deal of other things. But it is all of Christ and nothing of any other foreign elements.

But you find it is through the body that Christ is to express himself. That's the body. Now what is my body? My body is not only the reservoir of all the riches of the head.

But my body is also the expression of the head. All the actions of my body expresses the head. What my head is thinking, what my head desires, you'll find it is expressed in my body.

That is the church. The church is the body that is filled with Christ himself. And by the church he expresses himself.

And of course you'll find Ephesians chapter 5 he is the saviour of the body. You know that's a mystery. He is the saviour of the body.

Of course that goes way back to Genesis chapter 2. You know? Even before sin entered into this world you'll find God said to man it is not good for man to be alone. And he put man to sleep. And out of his side he took something and made a woman.

Which is his body. So brothers and sisters you'll find Christ is the saviour of the body. By that it means through the death of our Lord Jesus on the cross God took something out of him and made a body, the church.

And how he will nourish it and cherish it. How he will sanctify it by the washing of the word with, of the water with the word that he may present that body to himself. A glorious church without spot or wrinkle of any of such a sort.

That is the body. And that is the church. That is his expression.

Then you go on to chapter 2 and you'll find Paul said what is the church? The church is the one new man. The whole man is all corrupted. The whole man is all divided.

There is an enmity in the whole man. Especially you'll find this is demonstrated among the Jews, between the Jews and the Gentiles. They have nothing to do with each other.

But here you'll find through the cross, by the blood in Christ he has made us the Jews and the Gentiles into one new man. Not only into one but into one new man. It's a new creation.

Entirely new. And this one new man is reconciled to God. One with God.

That is the church. All brothers and sisters the church is a new creation. All the natural enmity all the natural distinctions discriminations are set aside on the cross.

The Jews and the Gentiles. But neither Jews nor Gentiles. When God brings the Jews and the Gentiles together the strange thing is when they are brought into Christ they lose their Jewishness and their gentleness.

Neither the Jews nor Gentiles. It is Christ. New man.

They are one with one another and one with God. Now that is the truth. That is why we need to keep diligently the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

That is why we cannot move away from that new ground that God has given to us. If we get up into the old ground we are not only divided but we are having enmity one with another. But it is one new man that is the church.

One new man. It is Christ. And then in the same chapter two of Ephesians you find the church is the house of God.

We are being built together into a habitation of God by His Spirit. God not only dwells in each one of us but God dwells in our midst. Wherever two or three are gathered together unto my name there am I in the midst of them.

So people said you have an additional portion of Christ when God's people are together. We are the house. We need to be built one to another.

Not just scattered but built. And in the process of this building much work needs to be done. And if we are really built together then we can house God.

In other words the presence of the Lord will be there. He is able to rest among His. You know every house in a sense is the expression of the owner of the house.

You go to a house and you can see the character of that owner. Because only that will make the owner feel comfortable in the house. You can go to a hotel or a motel and spend a night there but if you live there

forever you won't be comfortable because it doesn't seem to answer to what is within you.

You will transform that room into something that will correspond to your taste and then you'll feel comfortable. You can rest. Brothers and sisters, what is the church? The church is the house of God.

He is the son over His house. And you'll find His taste will be expressed in the arrangement of everything and that will make Him comfortable. Otherwise He won't enter into rest.

Then you go on and find what is the church? The church is the bride of Christ. In Ephesians chapter 5 the bride of Christ. And the idea of the bride is the thought of union.

There must be such a union between Christ and His church. And lastly in chapter 6 you'll find the church is a warrior. Now very often we take chapter 6 as a personal thing.

In other words, lots of times we say now every Christian is engaged in a spiritual conflict. Now in order to be able to meet the spiritual conflict you need to take upon yourself the panoply of God, the whole armor of God. And brothers and sisters, there is a there is a side to that.

Just as the soldiers when they are fighting in the battlefield each has a place in the battle. Now remember the battle is much bigger than what one individual soldier is facing. The warrior actually in Ephesians 6 is a corporate warrior.

It is the church. The church is that warrior. The church is closed with the armor of God.

And the church is entering into the spiritual conflict to stand to withstand and to stand. How we need one another in spiritual conflict. If in the battle one soldier should expose himself above and beyond the other soldiers he will be shot.

He will become a target of the enemy. We have to move on together as the warrior of God. And brothers and sisters, God has promised us that he will even put Satan under our feet.

Satan is not only to be made a footstool of Christ but God will put Satan under our feet. That he is under the feet of the church. That's in Romans 16.

The first time I noticed that, that was years ago. When I was a young Christian I met Brother Neal and I asked him to write something to my autograph you know. And he wrote that verse.

I couldn't understand it at that time. I didn't notice that verse. God will soon put Satan under your feet.

And I didn't notice that there is such a verse in the Bible. It's in Romans 16. And brothers and sisters I do not know what the meaning is.

But you know as you go on with the Lord, that meaning will become clearer and clearer. Why? Because the church in union with Christ is that warrior. And God has not only put Satan under the feet of Christ, but he will soon put him under our feet.

This is the church. Now if you see the church in these various ways isn't it something tremendously big? No wonder it is the mystery of the Christ. If you want to know Christ, what he is, what he means, what he is all about, you have to know him by the church, through the church.

So brothers and sisters this is the mystery of the Christ. Shall we pray? Our Father we do praise and thank thee because it is thy good pleasure to reveal thy Son to us and in us. That we may know thy mystery.

We thank thee for sharing thy secret with us. For giving thy Son to us. All our prayer is that we may always see him.

That we may not look away from him. We may be fully occupied with him and him alone. O Lord how we praise and thank thee because thou dost further reveal thyself to us in thy church.

By seeing thy church we see thee in a fuller way. So Lord we pray that by thy grace thou will reveal the mystery of the Christ to us. That we may not only see it but we may diligently keep it.

That we may also learn to toil with it. Laboring as it were to bring everyone perfect before thee in Christ. So Lord do help us to be good stewards of the mysteries of God.

We ask all in the name of our Lord Jesus and for his glory alone.

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