**​The Mystery of Christ**

Hope Chapel Honolulu

Ephesians 3:1-13

6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

(Ephesians 3:6-7, ESV)

**Introduction**

While to the religious rulers of Israel it seemed foolish for Christ to have chosen the Twelve, it was scandalous for Christ to share meals with tax collectors, prostitutes, and other lowlifes, even if they might have been descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That’s why it was no surprise that the Jews rioted when and where Paul spoke of extending the good news and promises of Christ to the Gentiles. But the gospel insists that this was God’s intention all along: *to reconcile all mankind back to Himself in Christ.*

**1. Stewarding the grace and truth of Christ. (Ephesians 3:1-5)**

 a) Paul’s stewardship of God’s grace for the Gentiles.

 b) The (then) newly revealed mystery of Christ.

**2. The mystery of Christ and the gospel. (Ephesians 3:6-10)**

 a) “Fellow heirs, members of the same body and partakers of Christ’s promise.”

 b) The role of the Church in the unveiling of the “unsearchable riches of Christ.”

**3. God’s eternal purpose realized in Christ. (Ephesians 3:11-13)**

 a) The eternal purpose of God realized in Christ Jesus (Genesis 3:15).

 b) Towards a proper understanding of Paul’s confidence, faith, suffering, and glory.

**Conclusion**

The Jewish believers were made jealous by God’s love for the Gentiles, which ultimately challenged their faith and practice. However, the Scriptures make it clear that all of us “were by nature, children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:1-3) and that “none are righteous, not even one” (Psalm 14:1-3, Romans 3:10-12). Consequently, even as the love of God for those who are outsiders, strangers, and those we perceive as enemies continues to be a challenge to our faith and practice, we could not be redeemed, reconciled, and restored to relationship apart from this love of God.

**For our prayerful study, discussion, and application:**

1) Practice quieting and “CAKES” before sharing recent stories of escaping enemy mode.

2) Read Ephesians 3:1-13 and share one thing the Spirit shows or tells you through the text.

3) Confess your needs and pray for one another (see James 5:13-20).

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