

Colossians 1:26- 2:19

1:26 – Paul responsibility in the “household” of God was to reveal the mysteries to the Gentiles in this new age (the church age). Paul uses the word “mysteries” (μυστήριον) to refer to hidden truths that were written, but not fully revealed in the text of the Old Testament. The Quran community used this same concept to communicate the unexplained truth in the Old Testament that lay waiting for a future day for its revelation and its explanation. With the coming of the Messiah (which included his ministry, death and resurrection) the day of revelation of these mysteries had begun. The word corresponds to the Aramaic “raz” (“secret”) used in Daniel 2:18, 19, 27, 28, 29, 30, 47 to reference eschatological events that were not yet fully understood. Paul uses the word “mystery” 21x including 1 Cor. 2:6-10 and Romans 16:25-27. Anytime Paul uses words such as “reveal,” “make known,” “manifest” he is most likely talking along these lines.

Paul says these mysteries are revealed to the “saints.” This means to the average believer. It is a shame that at so many times in church history the church has been responsible for withholding these mysteries from the very saints they were responsible to reveal them to.

Notice also the words similar to “mystery”:

- a) hidden
- b) revealed

1:27 – The mystery is that the Jewish Messiah dwells in the believing Gentiles.

Two interpretations concerning this state: “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Note: The parallel verses in Ephesians do not have a similar statement even though the same content is being discussed.)

- a) The indwelling Christ in the believer. Problem with this interpretation is that it is not developed in these verses.
- b) Christ now dwelling with the Gentiles. In the OT the Jews considered themselves living among the Gentiles as the hope of future glory for the Gentiles. In this context, it is not the Jews who bless the Gentiles, but the Christ.

Notice the words piled together by Paul to describe how incredible this is:

- a) great
- b) riches – πλουτος “ploutos” ... This word is used by Paul to speak of God/Christ’s spiritual riches in Romans 2:4; 9:23; 10:12; 11:33; Phil. 4:19.

Note how Paul used this word in Corinth and how the Corinthians abused it which led Paul to correctly identify it:

- a. Cutting irony of 1 Cor. 4:8
- b. Corinthians fail to recognize source - 2 Cor. 8:9
- c. This “ploutos” is in jars of clay - 2 Cor. 4:7
- d. Apostle’s poverty, yet ability to distribute wealth - 2 Cor. 6:10
- e. Possession of “ploutos” produces compassion for people and the ability to be compassionate - 2 Cor. 8:2, 7

In Ephesians Paul uses the word “treasures” in the parallel verses (Ep. 1:7, 18, 3:8, 16.)

- c) Glory – is δόξα “doxa” used in the OT to identify the glory of God. Paul is talking about the very glory, character, nature of YHWH has been revealed to the Gentiles, dwells in the Gentiles and is the hope (or, a deposit) for future glory.

Paul sees this as fulfillment of what the prophets spoke in the OT concerning the Gentiles. See Romans 15:8-13 quote of OT and Romans 15:16-21 Paul defines his ministry.

Ultimately, Christ is the center of the mystery which is “Christ in the Colossians.” Christ has been revealed to the Gentiles, but the Colossians are Gentiles who have believed. So, the Colossians have Christ in them. 1 Timothy 3:16 describes this “mystery” perfectly: “the mystery of godliness –

- The Son of God manifested in the flesh
- The Son of God vindicated by the Spirit (resurrected by God after men condemned)
- The Son of God seen by angels (mystery “seen” or understood in the heavenlies!)
- The Son of God proclaimed to the Gentiles (Christ among the Gentiles)
- The Son of God believed on by the Gentiles (Christ in the Gentiles, or, ‘Christ in you’)
- The Son of God taken up in glory (fulfilled eschatological purpose)

1:28 – Paul describes his ministry with “we” to include all who were branching off and helping in the proclamation of this mystery to the Gentiles. Paul uses three verbs:

1. “proclaim” (“kataggello” καταγγελλω) is used as a technical term for preaching the gospel. And this is describe as being done with the following two words. For Paul, the proclamation of Christ, the mystery, included :
 - a. “warning” or “admonition” – this verb “noutheteo” νουθετεω meant to set the mind of someone in proper order by correcting their world view and putting them in a right relationship with reality. This word is used in Ephesians 6:4 concerning parents giving admonition to their children. In Titus 3:10 it is used to refer to correcting those with false beliefs.
 - b. “teaching” or “instruction” – NOTICE THAT PROCLAIMING CHRIST CONTINUES WITH THE TEACHING MINISTRY! Also NOTICE – the proclamation of Jesus is never considered to be a brief 3-minute invitation to accept Christ at the end of a sermon about “How to be a Better Man,” or “How to Find and Keep Friends.” The proclamation of the mystery involved creating a new worldview and understanding the mystery! This will take more than a few classes and a few memory verses.

2. “Perfect” is “teleios” τελιος which means “complete,” “whole,” “perfect.” This is a reference to the “parousia” or the coming of the Lord.

Notice the three uses of “everyone”: “warning everyone,” “teaching everyone” and “presenting everyone.” Three things to point out here:

1. The sequence of Paul’s ministry that falls under the general category of “proclaiming the gospel.” It involves a three-step process of ministry: Warn, Teach, and, finally, Present. Warning is evangelism. Teaching is discipleship. Presenting is the eschatological event of glorification (phase three)
2. Paul’s ministry was aimed at “everyone” and he says that three times.
3. The focus was eschatological when the believers are presented as perfect before the throne of God.

1:29 – “struggling” (here and in 2:1) is a reference to the athlete striving, straining, suffering, enduring, overcoming

2:1 –

2:2 –

Purpose of Paul visiting/writing: Encourage believers in heart and united in love

The Target: So they may have full riches of complete understanding

End Game: Know the mystery of God (which is to know Christ) in whom are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!

2:3 –

2:4 –

2:5 –

2: 6 –

2: 7 –

2:8 –

2: 9 –

2: 10 –

2:11 –

2:12 –

2:13 –

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2:18 –

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