**In Christ**

**Part VII**

Review:

In Christ, In Him, In the Lord 164 times in Paul alone.

So how do we get into Christ?

Gal 3:26-27, Rom 6:3-4

Consider all that we have in Christ:

**I. We are redeemed in Christ. Coll 1:13-14. Eph 1:7**

**II. We are Holy/Saints/Sanctified in Christ Phil 1:1, 1 Cor 1:2**

**III. You Are Righteous in Christ 2 Cor 5:21**

**IV. You Are Alive in Christ**

**V. You Are a New Creation in Christ**

**VI. There is No Condemnation for those who are in Christ**

**VII In Christ You Are Chosen by God**

**VIII We Are All Children of God in Christ**

**IX You Have Secure Love in Christ**

**X We have eternal life in Christ Jesus**

**XI Peace With God in Christ Jesus**

**XII Fullness of God in Christ Jesus**

**XIII We Have Surpassing Worth in Christ**

**XIV We Are All One in Christ**

**XV All the Promises of God Find Their ‘Yes’ in Christ**

2 Cor 1:18-20a

*But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silas and Timothy—was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.” For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.* (2 Corinthians 1:18–20a)

Q: How many promises? Q: Where? In Christ

So, let us not waver in our faith. Let us believe and speak, and let us watch God fulfill all his promises in Christ.

**XVI You Have Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ**

Eph 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Where are all the spiritual blessings found? You guessed it! In Christ.

1. Value

2. Purpose

3. Security

4. Love, intimacy

5. Hope

**XVII The Mystery of God Is Revealed in Christ**

Pontius Pilate “What is truth?” (John 18:38).

Modernists and postmodernists still debate this question today.

Life has many great mysteries.

What is the meaning of life?

Does history have a purpose and a direction, or is everything random?

Why is the avocado pit so large?

Where is truth to be found?

Who holds the keys to the great mysteries of life?

We have shows like X-files. Unsolved Mysteries. Twilight Zone

Old Testament “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

Everyone likes a good mystery

In the Old Testament, much was revealed but much was left as a mystery.

Kingdom of God hinted in Old Testament.

Clues as to timing of arrival.

Prophecies of Messiah.

1 Pet 1:10-12

Concerning this salvation (that which is in Christ), the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with greatest care, trying to find out the time and the circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow… Even angels long to look into these things.

Much mystery

Unanswered questions

Guess what! In Christ, all is revealed.

The Mystery of ages is uncovered.

Colossians 1:25-27

I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people. To them God has chosen to make know among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is *Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

What do we have in Christ? We have Christ in us!

The mystery is Christ in us.

Paul continues with this idea:

Colossians 2:2-3

My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

The mystery *is* Christ.

Not only does he give us the answer. He ***IS*** the answer.

Every important answer is found in him.

What is my purpose? To become like him and to give him glory. We created to do good works, prepared in advance for us to do (Eph 2:1)

What is the meaning of life? Paul: For me to live is Christ.

What is my value? Infinite.

Where am I going/What happens when I die? Thanks to Jesus, to eternal life with God in his kingdom.

What is God’s will? That all be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.

Who am I? You are a child of God—created in his image.

What is the underlying nature of reality?

The secret of the kingdom of God is revealed in Christ

Mark 4:11 The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside, everything is said in parables.

What is the “secret” of the kingdom of God?

Ephesians 3:3-6

*Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 3:8-9

Paul’s goal was “to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God”

The mystery revealed is the means of salvation, first for the Jews, then for the Gentiles. All will inherit the promise together. Who would have thought of that idea?

We do not need the Freemasons and their secret handshakes.

Every important mystery is revealed.

Origin of the universe? Christ! (by him and through him all things were created Coll 1:16)

Is there meaning to history? Yes! Christ is the predestined one. All world events point to Jesus. He is the reason for the pax Romana. He is the one born at the crossroads of Europe, Africa and Asia.

His birth/incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension and return are the focal points of all history.

Why the avocado pit is so large? Sorry….

Christ is the answer to all of the great mysteries of life.

Challenge: That is an easy one.

Make Christ and his mystery known to the world.

Q: Who will you reveal the mystery of Christ to this week?

Let us, as ambassadors, make this mystery known to as many as possible, which is Christ in us, the hope of glory.

**XVIII The Reality of God Is Found in Christ**

This topic is related, plus I introduced the idea last summer.

The Old Testament is a shadow. It is a mere diorama. It is a symbol. The real thing is found in Christ.

Colossians 2:16-17 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These things are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

In a dim room things are less clear. Fuzzy. Our pupils dilate. We can only see black, white and shades of grey.

In Christ, all is made clear.

Shadows are indistinct (because the sun is not a point of light)

This is life outside of Christ. Meaning does not come into focus. We see truth, but only dimly. We needed to come into Christ.

We say “Let’s get real.” In Christ, things get real.

Hebrews 8:3-6 Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.

Copy = *hupodeigma* Like a sketch-plan. Like a diorama.

This is religion without Christ. Like the Holyland Model in Jerusalem.

Which would you like to worship at?

Shadow = *skia*

Heb 10:1 “The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves”

Imagine someone talking to your shadow. Hey! I am right here!

The tabernacle was only a shadow of Jesus serving as high priest in heaven.

Moses lifting up the snake in the wilderness to save them from the snakebite is a shadow of Christ being lifted up.

Moses leading the people out of slavery in Egypt is a shadow of Christ leading us out of spiritual slavery.

Moses giving the people bread is a shadow of Jesus, who is the bread.

Abraham offering his one and only son at Mt. Moriah is a shadow of God offering his one and only son on the same mountain.

Challenge: Let us go for the real thing. Let us throw of being religious and embrace the reality of life in Christ with all that entails.

**XIX You Have the Promised Holy Spirit in Christ**

Joel 2:28–29 we learn that in the last days, “I will pour out my Spirit on all people… Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.”

Ezekiel 36:27 “I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”

Ezekiel 37:14 “I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord”

In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit was around. David begged God in Psalm 51:11 “Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me”

Here is the big difference: John 14:17 “he lives *with* you and he will be *in* you”

In Christ, God comes and makes his home in our bodies. He lives in us.

Ephesians 1:13-14 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirt, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

We have God’s indelible seal of approval in Christ.

It guarantees our salvation.

What guarantee did we have outside of Christ?

When did we receive this seal?

Acts 2:38-39

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

He convicts us of sin (John 16:8–9).

He helps us to stop sinning (Romans 8:5–11).

He helps us in our prayers, communicating things that words cannot even express (Romans 8:26–27).

Outside of Christ we were alone; we were desolate and without hope.

In Christ, Christ lives in us through the Holy Spirit.

Actually, this IS the mystery. Let’s go back:

Coll 1:27 To whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Challenge:

Let us live holy lives and not quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19)

Let us keep in step with the Spirit (Gal 5:25)