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All right, we're gonna have a jam-packed night. Get your pencils and paper, get your Bibles out. This is gonna be a fire hose, okay? So just be ready to go.

And I'm probably gonna go very quickly through this. I have written 19 pages of introduction to the book of Ephesians. So we're gonna get through it.

And this is going to give us a great, great introduction to the book of Ephesians. And I think you're gonna enjoy the ride, okay? So we're gonna be here several weeks in this. And just stay with us, we'll get through it.

But I think you're going to be amazed and learn something each and every night. Tonight's probably going to be what in the world did I get myself into? So anyway, so I'm just gonna go, okay? Early in the history of my studying the Bible, it was obvious to me that God had something very special in mind for me. I had no idea what it was.

I had no idea why he was sending me around the world. I had no idea why I was talking to people or whatever. But I didn't come into these studies with any idea of what that would be either.

I just felt that I was going to be used for something I really didn't know what it would be. So I'm not the kind of person, you guys probably don't know this, I'm not the kind of person who typically sits and plans. Okay, I hate business planning.

I hate all of that stuff. I know it's gotta be done. I hire people to do it, but I hate it, okay? Because how in the world am I gonna predict anything in the future that goes? Okay, I deal with high level stuff.

I don't deal with, okay, we're gonna go into this market, we're gonna do this, whatever. I just don't do that, all right? Been very successful at business, raised a whole lot of money, but I don't like business plans, okay? Because they're obsolete the day you write them. That's the issue is you have to make them a living document and you have to change them along the way.

Okay, so therefore in my studying, I don't do that either. I don't plan what I think I'm going to get out of it. I don't plan a study.

I open up and say, where are you gonna take me today and what are you gonna teach me, all right? The only time I plan is if I'm preparing a class for you guys, okay? So, but I'm excited about this because it's a book that I absolutely love. I've taught it many, many times in other situations and the riches of this book are unlimited. It's a very sharp book, it's six chapters and more than any other book in the Bible, I feel this book was the catalyst that launched this Bible study group.

I can say that because we have grown from one person to an average of 80 people in a week's time in less than two years, okay? That's phenomenal growth, especially when you're dealing with an online Bible study, okay? Because you don't see, we don't feel, we don't touch. That's the reason why December was so good for us is because we could get together and we could talk, we'd see somebody face to face, we could hug, we could do whatever became natural and it became a very graceful time to be together in not only fellowship, but in talking and testifying or testimony of our experience with God. So it's just really an incredible thing and it isn't due to one individual or it's due to the will of God, but it's due also to an understanding of the principles of the book of Ephesians, which is a very vital book in all of scripture.

Now, I really feel that the growth and the maturing of the saints, so we're gonna get into this word saints and the definition of these things as we get into the study, but I think that the maturing of the saints is a direct result of what was formulated out of the book of Ephesians. Ephesians in the original canon did not have the term Ephesians in the letter. It was to the church of blank and it was sent out to all of the churches and they filled in their name and then read the letter to them based upon putting their name in that space.

So this is a generalized letter to all churches, to all seven churches in Revelation that we have studied. Now, just as an introduction, look at the first two verses of the first chapter. Now, we're gonna talk a little around that thought.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God to the saints who are at Ephesus. Now, remember that was just blank and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And thus does Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, introduce us to this marvelous book.

That was his introduction. Now, to set this in perspective, there was an article some years ago posted by the Los Angeles Times that revealed a husband and wife who were in their 50s died in their apartment complex in LA. Now, what was interesting about this in this story was that when the police found their bodies, which was at some point later down, that it already began to decay by the time that they were discovered, they searched the apartment and found a closet with a whole pile of little paper bags.

And when they opened those little paper bags, they found a total of $40,000 of cash in those paper bags. Now, these people died of malnutrition. So what this is, is it's ridiculous to die of malnutrition and have $40,000 in paper bags in your closet.

Now, there was a lady, you're gonna know this for those who are history buffs, there was a lady in our history known as Hattie Greene. Now, Hattie Greene was called America's greatest miser. All right, you guys know what miser is.

Basically, it's one that didn't spend any money. When she died in 1916, okay? Now, I understand this is a long time ago. When she died in 1916, she left an estate valued at $100 million back then.

Now, that's a lot of money in 1916, okay? If you put it in today's dollars, that's in billions category. But Hattie Greene was so miserly that she said she ate cold oatmeal because it was too expensive to heat the water to warm it. And her son had a severe leg injury, and it was so severe that she was delaying trying to find a free clinic where it could be treated.

And her delay was so long that it caused her son to develop such an infection that his leg had to be amputated. Now, she's sitting on $100 million. Now, that's a very strange lady, but it's a true story.

To die with $100 million in your estate and your son loses his leg, that's really no understanding how to use your resources, I would think you would agree. But this is how the book of Ephesians is written. It's written to Christians just like that, okay? So you're gonna say, well, what does that mean? Or what kind of Christian is that like? The kind of Christian who doesn't understand the riches that he has in Christ.

We're gonna get into this kind of Christian who wanders through life with a case of spiritual malnutrition that doesn't know where the feast is. The kind of Christian who doesn't know how to tap his resources maybe because he doesn't know where they are. And so he never really finds out how rich he is.

If you get a handle on the book of Ephesians, which it's gonna be my job to make that happen, some people have called this the bank of the believer. This is your spiritual checkbook. And every time you write a check out of this bank, your funds are not diminished.

In other words, you can write checks on all of the riches of God as often as you want for as much as you want and never diminish the accounts. Isn't that nice? You're gonna say yes. And I'm telling you it's there.

That's the book of Ephesians. It's a book about riches. It's a book about fullnesses.

It's a book about being filled with things. It's a book about inheritance. It's a book that just tells us what we own in Christ.

Some have called it the treasure house of the Bible. Now, during the depression, to give you a point of reference, my parents lived through the depression, so I know this almost firsthand. In some cases, the banks would not allow you to withdraw anything of your funds.

In other cases, they would limit you to 10% of your funds over a period of time. But God's bank doesn't work like that. You have an open checkbook.

You can draw out all you want when you want it and as much as you want it, and it never diminishes your account. But you don't know that unless you understand the principles in the book of Ephesians. So you want to get the book of Ephesians and get it down good.

As I said, this is the center point of Christianity. It'll absolutely revolutionize your life, and I think we're going to have a re-revolution in our lives because of this, and it will teach you who you are, how rich you are, and how you are to use these riches for God's glory. Now, I want you to see that the book is based on this kind of thing.

The idea of riches and fullness inherits by just a couple of illustrations. For example, let's go to chapter one, verse seven. Talks about the riches of his grace at the end of the verse.

Chapter three, verse eight, talks about the unsearchable riches of Christ. Chapter three, verse 16, the riches of his glory. So you have all the riches of his grace, the Father, all the riches of his glory, the Son, and all the riches, I'm sorry, riches of his glory, the Spirit, and all the riches of his Son, Jesus Christ.

So the whole trinity is giving you everything. It's in your account, but you're not tapping it. In other words, God is unloading all his riches in the book of Ephesians.

The word grace is used 12 times. The word grace means God's unmerited, undeserved kindness and favor. Grace is behind all of this lavishness that God pours out.

So the word grace is used 12 times. The word glory is used eight times. The word inheritance is used four times.

The word riches is used five times. The word fullness and filled are used seven times. And the key to everything is because we are in Christ, that all the fullness of the riches of the inheritance of the glory of his grace is ours.

Hope you're getting the picture. Because we are one in Christ in his church, because we are redeemed, this in... Did you freeze? The fullness of God. It's just an incredible thought that literally the believer can be filled with all the fullness of God himself, that we would know the unsearchable riches of Christ, that we would be able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we could ask or think according to the power that works in us.

You say, it's all about grandiose concepts. Fullness, riches, inheritance, wealth, resources, all in the book of Ephesians. There are enough resources in heaven to cover all past debts, present liabilities and future needs and still not diminish your account.

That's God's plan. Do you wanna be blessed that way? Okay, being blessed that way causes you to do something. Okay? Continuing in chapter three, verse 19, the fullness of God.

In chapter four, verse 13, come to the knowledge of the stature of the son of God to the perfect man to the measure of the statute of the fullness of Christ. It's not talking about standing up tall. It's talking about law.

Spiritual law. So you have in Ephesians 3, 19, the fullness of God, 4, 13, the fullness of Christ, 5, 18, be filled with the spirit, the fullness of the spirit, the fullness of the spirit, the fullness of Christ, the fullness of God, the full glorious gracious resources of God. It's all yours.

There's nothing held back. You're holding it back. And by the way, there's a gift edge guarantee for all of this.

You know, you can go to any bank and you put your money in there and the bank is going to say it's insured, which you already know that that's not true. It's all going to be protected, which we know that that's not true. But in this process, you want a guarantee.

You want a guarantee about everything. You don't want to get off a dime until you know what's going to be the end result. I said, I want to call out hypocrites.

I'm almost there, okay? Because what I see is you like what you hear, you research what you hear, but you don't do anything about it. And yet you complain. Oh, and what happened to the complainers in scripture? Okay? So somewhere in this process, I had to break through the pea brain mine to get you to see that your mind is more full than what you think it is.

That's Ephesians. So the guarantee for the believer in all of this is where it says in Christ. Remember, in our mysteries, we said Christ is in us and we're in Christ.

That duality gives you your guarantee. And as secure as Christ is in the plan of God and in the love of the Father, and as available as the resources of God are to Christ, so available are they to us. If you're in Christ and Christ is in you, where is the issue? Yeah, it's between your ears.

Because in our union with Christ, we become according to Romans eight, joint, what? Heirs. If we're joint heirs, what's holding it back from you? You have joint heirs to everything Christ has. You think about that.

Everything Christ has, you have if you're a believer. That's by scripture. We've just gone through it.

And as Hebrews says, he is not ashamed to call us brother. And he that is joined to the spirit, in 1 Corinthians 6, 17, or joined to the Lord, rather is one spirit knows we're one. We're one in the body of Christ.

We're one with Him. Everything He's got, we got. He possesses, I'm sorry, we possess what He possesses.

All His riches are at our disposal. Peter calls it an inheritance that laid away in corruption and undefiled reserved in heaven for us. That's Ephesians.

Now, it's all in Christ. It's all because we're in Christ. And if you're not in Christ, you're poor, you're destitute, you're a pauper, you're a beggar.

Why? Because you don't have an unlimited checkbook. If you're in Christ, you're rich, but you're rich beyond your wildest imagination. What did I say several times now? If you don't wanna pay for your house, give your house to God.

Why? You should be just stewards of what He's gonna give you anyway. If you're stewards of what He gives you, He's gonna pay for it. So why are you concerned about your bills? Now, you need to be good stewards of what He gives you.

Don't go out and run up $100,000 on five credit cards, and have a house and a car and a new boat, new wardrobe and blah, blah, blah, blah, all this other stuff. That's not being a good steward. If you're a good steward, He's gonna pay for everything that you get.

And He multiplies it. It's like the credit rating. If you're a good creditor, you're gonna get higher credit.

You're gonna be able to get higher credit. You're gonna get more credit. That's is in Christ.

If you are a good steward, He's gonna give you more and more and more and more and more. And oh, by the way, you don't have to pay it back. For example, in Ephesians, all of our riches are based on these things.

His will, chapter one, verse five, His grace, chapter one, six and seven, His glory, chapter one, 12 and 14, His power, chapter one, 19, His love, chapter two, four, His good pleasure, chapter one, nine, His purpose, chapter one, 11, His calling, one, 18, His inheritance, one, 18, His workmanship, two, 10. It's all because of Him. It's all that we are in Christ.

And thus, these things become ours. It's His will and testament. He wrote His last will and testament before He ascended into heaven.

And His last will and testament is what's in the Bible that gives us our inheritance. So this is your first, this is your bank book. This is your treasure house.

This is where you check out your resources. And in the first, now watch this, in the first three chapters, He tells you what they are. It's the theology and doctrine as we talked about.

And in the last three, He tells you how to use them. So you're gonna get the game plan. You've got to get it all.

You've got to stay with us for the whole thing. You can't spend them if you don't know what they are. And if you know what they are, you've got to know how to spend them.

Spend them correctly. That's the term. Everybody wants something to go spend it like I want to do, but they don't want to spend it like God tells them to do.

And then you want to know why you have problems. So the first three chapters are about the theology of the rich believer. You've got to be a believer to get this because if you're not a believer, you're not going to get any part of it because he doesn't even know you.

The practice is in chapters four to six. And there are other things that are involved, but that's just the main thing. Now, let me go a step further and turn the corner a little bit in your thinking.

Just kind of follow that category of riches related to the Ephesians. And I want to talk about another dimension. Dimension, guys, you get this? Dimension.

It not only talks about our riches, but it talks about the whole idea that all this is ours because we're in the church. We are the church. We are the currency, okay? Because we're in the church, we get access to this.

It's all ours because we're in the church. And by that, I don't mean that we're Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Mormons, Roman Catholic, none of that stuff. Denominations are out the window.

There's not one single word in the Bible talking about denominations. And in fact, religion is not only in the Bible except in James, and he says, don't go to it. So stop the things about, oh, we do this in this way, we do this this way, that's not biblical.

We're getting real now, guys. I said, we're gonna get really real. We're gonna get real here because all of your religious doctrine, all of your denomination charter and the way you do things ritualistically is not biblical.

So when you begin to compare the scripture to your religion or your denomination, you've just gone outside of the charter of God. I hope you're getting it. All right, let's go.

What I mean is simply that we are in the body of Christ. That is who we are. That is the church.

It's the body of Christ. It's not a frigging denomination. It's not a religion.

It doesn't deal with rituals. We're not under the law. None of that applies.

We are in Christ. That is the key phrase. In fact, you saw it as we started to read the book, okay, in the first couple of chapter.

In the very first verse that ends in Christ Jesus, but because we are in Christ and in his church, all these things accrue to us. That's the key. We are in his body.

He's the head of the church. That's his body. He, Christ is in us through the Holy Spirit.

And we're in Christ because when we're saved, we become the body of Christ. Now, the book then discusses the church. We're gonna get into the church a lot more.

It discusses what the church is, how the church functions, how we function in the church. And it discusses the riches of the church. The key thought relative to the church is the statement of Paul made in the third chapter.

And I'd like you to look at it. It's in verse, it's chapter, it's the third chapter three, verse three. Okay, and it says this.

Now, this is that will help you to get a grip on all of this. Now, don't worry about getting lost, okay, guys, because this is a long series. We're gonna get into the details as we get into the book, but let's see what it says.

Paul is talking about himself as an apostle and one who speaks the message of Christ and so forth. And he says, here is the special message that I want to give you in this book of Ephesians. How that by revelation he, referring to Jesus Christ, verse one, or God in verse two, he made known to me the mystery.

Now, Ephesians is about a mystery. The mystery, what mystery? Go down to verse five, skip the parentheses there, which in other ages was it made known to the sons of men as it is now revealed to the holy apostles and the prophets by the spirit. Mysteries, it's the mystery that has been hidden.

Nobody in the Old Testament ever knew about it. And nobody in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John knew about it until we get into Acts and it was revealed to Paul. It's been a mystery for a long time, guys.

But it's not a mystery anymore because it's now revealed, verse six, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body. Now, mark that term, circle it, do whatever, body. You're gonna go over that in detail.

It's the key to understanding Paul's definition of the church and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel. If you're saved, you are part of the body of Christ. Now, stay with me.

We're going to talk about this in a minute, but the book of Ephesians presents the mystery of the church. The mystery of the church. Now, what is this? In verse three, it is revealed, by revelation made known to me the mystery.

So that mystery has been revealed to Paul, and that was done in Acts. Now, what is the mystery? Verse five, something in other ages that wasn't made known. In other words, it was, as a matter of fact, you're gonna find that it's been a hidden secret since the foundation of the world that the church was ever gonna get created.

And it was made known. And what was it? That the Gentiles are fellow heirs of the same body, partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel. In other words, the hidden secret of the past was revealed to Paul in Acts.

And what was it? It was that the Gentile and the Jew would be in one body in the church. Gotta stay here with me. We're gonna expand this a little bit.

Let's talk about how God reveals things. This is very interesting. This is something you need to know.

This will help you to understand the mystery of Ephesians. There are three ways, okay, that I'm gonna mention to you that God reveals things. Number one, there are some things God never tells anybody, period.

Deuteronomy 29, 29. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong unto us and our children forever. So there's things that you don't know.

I don't know. We'll never know. Those are the secret things behind the scenes that God keeps secret, and it is part of his sovereignty.

God has some secrets that he never revealed to anybody anytime. These are secrets. You just don't know them.

I don't know them. Nobody knows them. God doesn't reveal them to anybody.

In other words, there are some things God reveals, but the secret things belong to the Lord, those he doesn't reveal. Now, you'll never know everything because God hasn't told us everything. Our brain, key brain minds could never handle it.

You know, scientists says that we use about 10% of the capacity of our brain. And above 10%, if you get into the 11, 12%, you become psychotic because you're now knowing stuff that you can't handle. So we're very, very limited.

I imagine we don't know one zillionth of what there could be out there. And so it's very minute. The secret things still belong to God.

He chose to reveal some things to men and some things he chose not to reveal at all to anybody. So God has some that are always kept secret. Second category of revealing.

God has some secrets that he reveals to special people all throughout history. Yes, what are these? Are these the super elite? No, no. The special people are believers.

Everybody that has been saved that lives in Christ is a believer, is a saint, okay? And he's transparent to all believers. He doesn't hold anything back if he reveals it. He reveals it to all believers.

That's why they're recorded in the pages of the word of God. If you don't read your Bible, you don't know what they are. The limitation is not on God.

He revealed them to you. You just don't know because you don't read. In Psalms 25, 14, it says this, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him and he will show them his covenant.

Proverbs 3, 32 says, his secret is with the righteous. Amos 3, 7, he reveals his secret unto his servants. So the righteous servants, the people of God, those that fear him, they know his truths.

Why? They study. Now, who are they? They're believers. They're you and me.

The fact of the matter is there are some things that nobody knows. The second part is there are some things that only believers know, and we know things the unsaved don't know. Now, they know some things about God, unbelievers.

Romans 1 says that they know something about his eternal Godhead, his power, so that they're without excuse. The world knows some things about God, but the secrets of God belong to the righteous people, the godly, those that are his children. So God reveals some things to nobody, at no time, at any time in history.

He reveals other things to his people, the believers. In fact, he came in Matthew 11, he told his disciples certain things that he never told the others, because he said, I am hiding them from the wise and the prudent and revealing them unto babies. Babies, his disciples.

Now, there's a third category. There are some things which God keeps secret from everybody for a period of time. And finally, reveals to his special people in the New Testament.

There were seven mysteries that we learned about. Those seven mysteries were not known to the Old Testament people. They were hidden from them and waited until he came to reveal them in the New Testament.

Point one, God keeps some secrets permanent. Point two, he reveals some things to all of his people through all history. And point three, he keeps some secrets through history until the New Testament reveals them only to the New Testament people.

Do you know, we know, things that the Old Testament saints didn't know? That's right. The New Testament wasn't written yet, so how could they know it? That's just logic. The New Testament is a new truth for a new age.

Sacred secrets revealed by God. In fact, the Old Testament saints used to look to try to see what things meant. Read in Peter's epistle.

He says that they were searching what this thing was they were writing. So they were writing things in prophecy. They didn't know what they were writing about.

A mystery simply means something that has been hidden and is now in the New Testament revealed. Remember what I said, Matthew, or Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, is Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and Acts unrevealed. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts is Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy revealed, okay? That's how it works.

Old Testament gives you the information, New Testament reveals it, and the Old Testament people don't know anything about it other than the Holy Spirit has guided them to write it down. That the church would come into existence and that it would be one body incorporating Gentiles and Jews in one living organism. Living, living.

It's not dead. You have access. That is something the Old Testament saints never saw.

They didn't know about it. It's a mystery to them revealed through Paul. Now, by the way, the man who was given, for the most part, the job of revealing the mysteries was Paul the apostle.

Remember, he had six out of the seven mysteries. John had the one talking about Babylon, mystery Babylon. He was the one to whom God revealed the sacred secrets that have been hidden from the Old Testament saints.

So there are mysteries. So when you see the word mystery in chapter three, verse three it simply means a spiritual truth never before revealed, but now revealed in the New Testament. The new truth for our new age.

We know things that people in all of the history of God's dealing with man never knew. We have spiritual truth. We have spiritual resources.

They never had them. Why? Because they didn't have Christ in them. The Holy Spirit was outside, not inside.

I mean, we are rich. And that's the basis of what the riches of Ephesians is made available to us. It is in this new age with new truths that never knew in the past.

Now let's talk about this concept a little bit by having you look with me at Matthew 13, verses 11. I want you to give some, I want to give you some background. So Matthew 13, 11.

So you understand this idea of mystery. Now Jesus was speaking in parables in order to reveal things just to his own people and to keep them from others. God has always kept his secret for his people, the righteous.

That's the reason why he spoke in parables. He did not want to give the truth to the people at large. 2 Corinthians 2, 14 says, rather says that if you don't know God, the natural man understandeth not the things of God.

They're foolishness to him. They're discerned by the spirit and he doesn't have the spirit. So it's always been to his people.

So those people that are not walking in Christ will never know the truth. Matter of fact, the scripture says that God gives them, what, blind discernment. He blinds them.

If you're not walking in Christ, you're not living in Christ. Oh, by the way, even Christians, okay? You got to come back a long way to get Christ to trust you to open your eyes. If you got your ticket, what did I say? If you got your ticket, but you're not living obediently in all things.

Think about that, guys. I said, do an inventory on yourself before we started this, right? What are you doing right? What are you doing wrong? What are you controlling? What God's controlling. If you're not obedient in all things, he blinds you.

As a Christian, he blinds you. He doesn't hear your prayers. So when Jesus talked, he talked in a way when he was on the earth that his people would understand it and the unbelieving would not.

And he talked in parables. So they said to him in verse 10, why do you speak in parables? And he said to them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Now, the mysteries hadn't even been given to Paul yet, but he was telling them, you're going to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven because Paul's going to tell you.

He already knew what the plan was. But to them, unbelievers, it is not given. They don't have the ability to understand.

Again, the mysteries are something hidden that God reveals to his special people in the New Testament age. Look at verse 35 of Matthew 13. He spoke in parables.

It says again, in order that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophet saying, I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter things which have been kept secret from when? The foundation of the world. This is Old Testament prophecy.

The prophets revealed that he was going to do this. They didn't have a clue even who this person was. They just knew it was going to be a Messiah.

They didn't know that the Messiah was Jesus Christ, why? Because they weren't living at the time when Jesus Christ came. In other words, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were special secrets from the foundation of the world until the New Testament era when Jesus opened his mouth and taught them. Beloved, I'm not trying to tell you something.

You know things that people in the Old Testament, no matter how devout they were, how devoted to God, how godly they were, never conceived of. What a spiritual resource that we have inside of us. What a treasure house of divine reality is ours because we are in Christ and in his church and living this incredible age when God's revelation is full and complete.

Now it says in verse 11 of Matthew 13, and these are the mysteries, not singular, plural, of the kingdom of heaven. Now, what is the kingdom of heaven? The kingdom of heaven refers here to the mystery form of God's kingdom. Christ came and he taught a dispensation gospel of what? His kingdom, not knowing who he was or the Beth Daryl and resurrection because he hadn't died yet.

He was teaching about his kingdom, the millennium, his kingdom. Now, let me see if I can give you an illustration to help you. There's no mystery in the Old Testament.

There's not one mystery in the Old Testament about the kingdom, none at all. I mean, the Old Testament prophets prophesized it in Isaiah and Jeremiah and many others. They said the kingdom was coming, Messiah would come and he would set up his kingdom.

That's all it was told to do. They didn't know who the Messiah was. They didn't know what the kingdom was.

They just wrote down what the Holy Spirit told them to write down. And Messiah meant king. Christ means king.

The anointed one was prophesied clear back in Genesis 49 that the scepter would be in the hand of the one from Judah. So they knew that the king was gonna come from Judah. He was gonna be a Messiah, a king.

He was gonna be the king over Israel and he was gonna set up his kingdom. That's all they knew. That's it.

Now watch. There was no mystery about the kingdom. There was no unrevealed stuff about a kingdom in that sense.

They knew the kingdom was coming. They believed it. They waited for it.

They anticipated it. In fact, when John the Baptist came, he said, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. They didn't know what kingdom.

They just know that that's what he was told to say. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. When Jesus came, he said, repent for the kingdom is at hand and he offered Israel a kingdom.

Yeah, he was a king. He was born a king. Remember, the wise man acknowledged him as a king even at his birth.

Guys probably haven't picked that up and draw the dots yet, but he was labeled as king at the time of his birth. Pilate confronted him with his claim to be a king. He came to set up a kingdom.

Every Jew knew that was what was going to happen. They knew that the kingdom was done. You're gonna learn in Acts that process.

I'm glad we're doing Acts and Ephesians together because it's going to be a powerful two sessions. Well, it says the mystery of the kingdom. What is the mystery? The mystery is not the king, that the king would come and bring a kingdom.

The mystery is what happened when they rejected the king. Who rejected the king? Israel did, three times. John the Baptist, the father.

Christ crucified the son. Stephen stoning, preaching to the elders of church, the spirit. They struck out at the Godhead of our lordship and the mystery is what happened when they did that.

After 33 years on earth, when the final verdict was in, this is what they said. We will not have this man to what? To reign over us. So they rejected the king.

They forfeited the kingdom. Remember Christ was standing up when Stephen was talking to the elders of the Jewish council and was hoping that basically Jewish council would accept him as a Messiah. And if he did, he was gonna set his kingdom up right then, but he sat back down because he didn't.

God postponed the kingdom. Christ came here. He was a king with a kingdom.

They rejected it and postponed the kingdom. Remember the Jews are gonna be taken care of again in the great tribulation, going all the way back to the time that Christ came and dissolved the law. Now they're gonna be back into the law.

Okay, that's what's gonna happen. So the kingdom is future. We believe Jesus will come again to set up his earthly kingdom.

We're told that in Revelation. And in Revelation, it tells us that he will come and he will set up his kingdom on earth and he will reign for how long? A thousand years. That is the future kingdom.

We say we are pre-millennial, sorry. That is where we believe he comes back previous to the millennium and sets up his earthly rule. In other words, he comes back for the church.

That's what scripture tells us. Some people are a-millennial, which means that basically they don't believe in millennial period. They don't believe in the earthly kingdom.

We do. We believe God's promise to Israel will be fulfilled because that's what scripture tells us. We believe that God's promise in the book of Revelation will be fulfilled because that's what scripture tells us.

We believe Jesus will come and set up an earthly kingdom. He will rule as a king. He will reign as king.

He will be crowned as a king. And that will be the fulfillment of his king as the right of king, a rule of kingliness, his right to rule. That's what God said that he was going to do for his son.

That's gotta be fulfilled. Now, so Christ came as king, but the kingdom was postponed because he was rejected. Now, what have you got in the middle here in that timeframe? Rejection to millennial, to his setting up a king.

What have you got in that period of time? Is he just going to leave things alone and saying, oh, for whatever period of time, I'm gonna do what I did from Malachi to Matthew for 430 years, I'm not gonna talk to anybody. Is that what he's gonna do? No, that's not what he did. This was never seen by the Old Testament saints.

They never knew about this gap. They never saw this gap. They never saw this parentheses that you see in the scripture.

They never saw this thing in the middle. So this is the mystery form of the kingdom of heaven, the part they never saw. Do you see it? And in this mystery form, there are a whole bunch of mysteries, a whole bunch of them.

There's 12 mysteries in Ephesians. That's why it's plural in verse 11. You see, if the whole period was never known, then things that occur in that period were never known either.

So you and I are living in a sacred secret. We're living in a period of time that was secret from the foundation of this world and was only revealed after Jesus came to this earth. We were living in a time that never was seen in history.

There are no definitions of this age in the Old Testament. There's no talking about the church. There are no descriptions on it.

There is no time for seeing when Jews and Gentiles will be one in the church. There is no time for seeing when God would set aside Israel and call on the Gentile people for his name. That's not seen.

Gentile conversion is seen in the kingdom. Gentile convert in the kingdom. Remember I said, God had plan A. If Israel had accepted him and would have set up his kingdom and God would have given us the Gentiles the ability to be saved in that kingdom.

But since the Jews rejected him, he went out and set the church up and made us his people of choice during this period. Remember, the Jews are on the sideline. We're the people of his choice today.

Gentile conversion occurred in the New Testament. It was never a time when God called the Gentiles to be his people in the way in which we see it in the church age. Until united with Israel in one body, this is the mystery never revealed and incredible secret never known or understood.

The only way we understand is because Paul told us. Now you say, but is it called a mystery form of the kingdom? In what sense is this kingdom? The king is absent. The king is in heaven.

Ah, another mystery. This, I think, this question is very vital. This is a kingdom.

We live in a kingdom. This is a kingdom. And in fact, in Colossians 1, it says, when you were saved, you were translated, translated out of the kingdom of darkness.

Remember your DNA change? Out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of his dear son. We're in a new kingdom. We say, how can it be a kingdom after all? The prince of the power of the air is Satan.

Satan rules the world. What do you mean? Let me give you something that will help you. In the future thousand year reign, Jesus reigns on earth, right? You got that.

He rules, there's peace. That's his kingdom. But in this time period, in the middle of this mystery, this sacred, secret period, Christ does not rule externally.

Why? Because he can't deal with sin. People talked about that. But he rules in the hearts of his people internally.

That's a secret. Now watch this. Now, about seven or eight years ago, I did a major study on this that really opened this to my understanding.

And I noted that everything that happens externally in the millennial kingdom happens internally in the present mystery form. Everything happens spiritually first. So if his kingdom is going to be his kingdom future in the physical form, he must experience that in the spiritual form first.

That is what's going on with us. So if he's gonna give all of his riches to all of his people in the kingdom, he's gonna give it to us first. Christ said, or God said to Mary, and he said to David, and he said to Christ, Christ said to the disciples, that he's going to reign externally in the throne of Jerusalem, in the city of David, in the millennium, setting on the mercy seat.

That's his throne. Now, where does he reign now? He reigns in the heart of the believer. He is enthroned in the kingdom where we have peace.

Peace comes from the inside out, in the heart of the believer where peace passes all understanding. In the kingdom, Christ will dispense salvation. That's the first part.

He has dispensed it in our lives now. That's the justification process. In the kingdom, there will be joy, happiness, and blessing, and things will flourish, and so do they in the life of an obedient believer now.

Operative word, obedient. So what is the external in the millennium is eternal in the mystery form. All of his promises that you see throughout scripture that talks about what he's going to do in the millennium, he's doing today.

Joint heirs, joint heirs, you getting it? We're joint heirs. We are here today, gonna be out of the way in the future. The Jews come back in, whatever they get, we get.

But we're getting it today. And so we're enjoying a kind of a pre-fillment. That's why when the church was born, that's why Peter got up and quoted the passage out of Joel and said, okay, this is a prophecy, gotta hear this out.

In Joel, you see he said, that which is prophesied for the eternal kingdom is coming to pass internally in this form. That was a Joel prophecy. How many of you knew that? You don't study.

It was like a pre-fillment, a preliminary fulfillment, a mystery form of fulfillment of what ultimately will occur in the kingdom. We're living in a sacred secret. We're living in an age the Old Testament never saw the mystery form of the kingdom.

And the key to this mystery is the incredible truth that God would take Jew and Gentiles and make them one and make them one body. That's the great secret. Everything the Jews get in the millennium by scripture, we're getting today.

Now, when this mystery kingdom, there are all kinds of other mysteries. As I said, there's 12 mysteries in Ephesians that we're gonna go over. And the New Testament's loaded with them.

There's more than the seven mysteries that were given to Paul and John. Different levels, different categories. The seven mysteries that were given to Paul to John, it sets the salvational process up, builds the church, gives us joint heirship, makes us the ability to inherit things now that the Jews will get in the future.

It is the crust of the matter, the hub and the wheel. This, there is the mystery of the indwelling of Christ. Remember that? We talked about that last week.

Colossians 1.26, the Old Testament saints never saw the reality that Christ would dwell in the hearts of his people. Why? Because they saw an eternal external kingdom. They didn't have the Holy Spirit inside of them.

That's part of the church. That was never revealed to them. Matter of fact, the Holy Spirit came and went, came and went, came and went, came and went in the Old Testament.

They didn't see the mystery form which is eternal, internal. And so they didn't see the indwelling of Christ. You know, in Colossians 2.2 and 3, it even talks about the mystery of God in the flesh.

They didn't even see the divine incarnation clearly. The Bible talks in Romans 11.25, the mystery of Israel's unbelief. They never saw that Israel would come to such full unbelief they'd be completely set aside and the Gentile church would be taking their place.

They never saw that in the Old Testament. Revelation 17, the mystery of Babylon, the terrible, vile economic and religious system of the end times wasn't even seen in the Old Testament. The mystery of the unit of believers in Ephesians, the mystery of the rapture.

I'll show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep. The rapture's not in the Old Testament because the church isn't in the Old Testament.

All those things are part of the New Testament, our sacred secret. And by the way, the whole mystery age will end. According to Revelation 10 and seven, when Jesus returns, the mystery of God will be complete.

And it talks about the mystery of the bride in Ephesians 5. Remember, we talked about that last week. We're the bride of Christ. The church is the bride of Christ.

And that's in Ephesians 5, the mystery of the church as a body. That was never seen in the Old Testament. So this age is full of sacred secrets just being revealed.

Now, we're part of this age when God has revealed incredible truth and put at our disposal unbelievable riches. And the book of Ephesians will unlock all of that for you. But the key truth that we need to get in the book of Ephesians is that the church is presented as a body, Ephesians 3, 6, a body.

This is a metaphor, but what a metaphor. Somebody says to gaze cows in. Well, that's not really what it's for.

A metaphor is a way of saying something that gives you a better understanding of it. Now, the metaphor is of a body. The church is like a body.

That is an interlinking organism. The church is not an organization. It's not a building.

It's an organism. It is a viral organism of spirits. The believers in dwelling of Christ, the Holy Spirit, is interconnected with each other.

The church is not an organization. It is not something you just join. It's not a building.

It's an organism. We're all one in Christ, not in a religion and not in a denomination. We're one inextricably unit.

We're all united. And if one believer, think about this, if one believer in the body doesn't do what he's supposed to do, the body malfunctions at that place. And when it malfunctions, somebody else has to pick up the slack and the body limps.

And that's why the world thinks Christ is cripple. Okay, let's just walk through this really, really slowly. You, by faith, by grace, you're saved.

And that's your ticket. And that's all you do. How many people are picking up your slack? And what is your slack? Do you even know what it is? Do you even know what you're causing about the other members to have to do that? They can't do what they're supposed to do if they're picking up your slack.

So the whole thing goes down. This is like the bad apple of the bunch. That's the reason why I said, you're not gonna like what you get in heaven if you're just gonna go on your ticket.

Because Bible's gonna say, you're gonna be set aside. You get no rewards. You get no crowns.

You just get a ticket to some little place that heaven offers you because God says you get a ticket. But oh, the people who pick up the slack, all of what you were to get, they get. The body must be whole and complete.

That's why Ephesians 4, it says, till we all come to the fullness of the stature of Christ, Christ should stand up in full functioning, form in his body, the church, just as he did in the human body in his incarnation. We're supposed to be like Christ, just like he was in his incarnation as the son of man in a human body. Is that on your inventory? Are you doing that? I like to call the church body two, Christ body one, your body two.

Your body two should be nothing more than Christ body one. Now take your inventory, write everything Christ did and see how you conform to body two. And we should be just as whole and just as full statured as he was when he came in one body.

The church is a body. You're individually a body. Collectively, we are a body together and Christ wraps us as the church.

Now the church is called a lot of things in the New Testament and they have parallels in the Old Testament, but the body isn't one of them. The body is never mentioned in the Old Testament. For example, in the Old Testament, God called his people a bride.

You remember Hosea? Hosea took a bride. Her name was Gomer. With a name like that, she should have been a prostitute.

Of course, anybody who would marry a girl named Gomer is bound to run into some kind of problem. So that was one. This is what happened to me.

My God, I've chosen you, Israel, and have you prostituted yourselves to a false God. So what all happened to Hosea happened to the church in the New Testament. They became a prostitute.

Why? Because he left God and went to idol worship with fornication. We saw that in all the churches. And in the Old Testament, another metaphor that was used was a vine, right? Christ is in Isaiah 5. I planted Israel a vine in a very fertile hill and I waited for Israel to bring forth grapes and she brought forth wild grapes.

That's scripture. But God saw Israel as a vine. Now he saw Israel as a flock.

Remember, there's also a vine in the New Testament. Remember, he prunes us. We're a vine.

The spirit inside of us is a branch off of Christ. So we're a vine. And what he does is prune that, okay? That's the discipline he does with us.

He prunes us to make us fruitful, useful and fruitful. He doesn't discipline you and prune you if you're not obedient. He leaves you alone.

Now you got weeds, okay? Yeah, the fig tree's another example too, Sam, okay? Israel was a flock, a flock. He led Joseph like a flock. Isaiah 40, he lifted them up and carried them.

He gathered the lambs in his arms and gently led those that were with young. He saw Israel as a flock. In Psalms 23, they said, the Lord is my shepherd.

So the idea of the vine and the flock and the bride, that's the Old Testament. But you know something? It's New Testament too. We just showed you that.

But there is nowhere, there's nowhere in the Old Testament that talks about the body of a church. In the Old Testament, God saw Israel as a family and they were to call him father. In the New Testament, we are the household of God, Ephesians 2 said.

And in the New Testament, we were called a building, a spiritual temple. And I think that's an Old Testament concept as well. So throughout the Bible, you have Old Testament identification of the people and a New Testament identification of the people that are the same.

There's only one term that doesn't do that. And that's called the body. Because that's what separates us from the Old Testament.

That's the mystery. That's why we all have to be functioning. And the body functions through the spiritual gifts.

First Corinthians, all about three operations, he talks about spiritual gifts. Through the gifts, through the response of the body, responsibilities of the fellowship and mutual ministry. And then Christ comes to full statue in his church.

And the reason the world has a hard time believing us is because of the unbelievable confusion of the church that puts forth a Christ that is really not very clear. If you don't read the Bible, you don't understand the body, you don't understand the body, you don't understand the church. If you don't understand the church, you don't understand the bride of Christ.

If you don't understand the bride of Christ, you don't know the connection. If you don't know the connection, you have no wealth. So we are a body.

The unity is the key, one body. The other metaphors gives the idea of it, but the body is the best one of all. We are one wife and one husband, one flock with one shepherd, one set of branches with one vine, one kingdom with one king, one family with one father, one building with one foundation, and the body with one head.

Not two, one. That means you left yours at home. And in the body, you see unity in a way you can't see it anywhere else.

A single body and yet just amazing diversity and mutual dependence. The human body is a perfect illustration of how the church is to function. We've gone through this human body like no other teaching has in spiritual teaching.

You understand the functionality of this body, and now you get to understand why. Because it is functioning like a church. Every organ is working with the other organ.

One can't live without the other. It's all interdependent. It's all flowing with one fluid system.

It is the body of the church, and you're even connected to everything around you. Now, when we learn these truths, and we stop being a group of people sitting on our own little sanctified seat, watching it from the cheat seats as it happens around us, then we'll start functioning like a body, coordinating, mutually ministering, and loving and sharing. Then we begin to move, and then we begin to understand the riches of our resources in Christ.

Now, the first three chapters of Ephesians gives us the theology of the body, the doctrine, the last three, the behavior. The first three doctrine, the last three practice. And you're going to see how this marvelous body of Christ functions, how rich it is, and how you take those riches and those resources and use them for God's glory and your benefit.

Let's go back a moment to look at the introduction, the first two verses. I told you that this book was about riches. This book is about inheritances.

This book's about fullnesses and being filled and having abundance and all in the church and all in Christ. And that's exactly what you're going to find out in the first two verses. It doesn't take long to get into this.

You're going to find it in the first two verses because everything Paul says in these first two verses, he says in double-barreled way. He's holding a shotgun in front of you with two barrels. First of all, a double source of authority.

Verse one, Paul, an apostle, now watch this, of Jesus Christ, source one, by the will of God, source two. Father and the Son, two sources. The two sources that make up the body of the church.

The Spirit's inside to guide you, but those two sources are the body of the church. It would be enough to say Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, but that's not what he did. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, number one and number two, by the will of God.

He brings in the fullness of God in Christ. That's the nature of Ephesians. It's about fullness.

What can you say about Paul? He starts out the first word, Paul, and we could go on and on and on for months about that. I just did a brief thing with you about Paul and Christ and whatever, but we could do a study of just a Paul, and we could be weeks looking at just Paul and what happened with him. He started out the verse of Paul, and what he was, he came from the tribe of Benjamin, and I'm sure his dear mother wanted to pick out a godly name for this little fellow, and he picked the one that was most well-known Benjamite who ever lived, which was Saul.

What a way to pick a son's name. The first king of Israel. And she named her little guy Saul, and he went out to become a great rabbi.

He was well-trained in the school of Gamaliel. In other words, everything you wanna know about politics, about religion, everything you wanted to know was this school. Paul was at the top of his class.

He was a world man. He was more than a man's man. He was a world man, okay? He knew the societies.

He knew the philosophies. He knew the scriptures of the Old Testament. He became a very well-known rabbi, a leader, a teacher, a member of the Sanhedrin.

Think about this resume. He became the most devout anti-Christian leader in the Jewish community. He hated Christians, and he went after them tooth and nail.

He was a murderer, but Christ says, this is the guy I need. So on his way to get some Christians, he was on his way to murder some Christians in Damascus. On the road, the Lord stopped him in his tracks.

Okay, ladies that are doing Christ incarnation dinner, this is another time. Christ met him on the road going to Damascus and converted him and made him a preacher of the gospel. For there he went to pastor a church in Antioch after a few years in the Arabian desert.

The Arabian desert is where this Holy Spirit taught him. So for two years, two plus years, he was out in the desert doing nothing but going to school. He went to pastor a church in Antioch.

He pastored there with four other fellows for a while. And then one day the Holy Spirit came in Acts 13 and says, separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work for which I've called them. That's when Paul and Barnabas left the church of Antioch and went on their mission trip.

It was that mission trip that the Lord revealed the mysteries to Paul on that way. And the Lord said to him, get out of here now. You're going to get fulfilled what I, you're going to get fulfilled what I told you on the Damascus road.

It's time for, you've been trained enough. You now have enough practical practice. I'm ready for you to be useful and fruitful for me.

You're going to take the gospel to the Gentile world. I can imagine if I were told that what I would do, I'd probably just fall down dead. And he started on what has to be considered the greatest missionary enterprise in the history of the church.

He founded churches in the Gentile world and the gospel became more than a small Jewish sect. It became a worldwide message. And by the way, the words at Ephesus in verse one, I already told you, didn't appear in the manuscript.

So this was a universal letter that he wrote to all the churches. And we know that Paul even mentioned a letter to the Laodiceans, and this may well have been in his mind from this letter. He could have gone to Sperna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Ephesus, all the way around the circle of churches and each would have written their own name in the line where it was blank and they could apply this letter to their church.

Because why? This is the fundamental message to the church. It tells you what your doctrine is, your theology. It tells you how to apply it, what you need to do.

This is the letter, the model letter for all churches. That's the reason why we're doing this. Now, notice he calls himself an apostle.

He's just not another guy with another opinion. He speaks for God. He tells you that.

In verse one, double barrel, he says, I'm doing this for Jesus Christ and the will of God. So he's not saying I'm doing this in Christ and oh, you have to determine whether God's behind this or not. No, he just sets it right out there.

He says, there's no issue here, guys. What I'm telling you is not only the truth, but it becomes by two authorities. And the third authority is inside of me.

He was the mouthpiece of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. Now, do you realize that there are only 14 men in history that could call themselves apostles with a capital A? 14. The first 12, Judas dropped out, Matthias came in, which made 12, and Paul becomes the 14th because Judas was an apostle also.

So there's only 14 guys in history that could call themselves apostles. Everybody else in this world today, all right, I'm just gonna call them out. Bishop Larry Gators calls himself an apostle.

He's sent, okay, to preach a gospel, but he can't be an apostle because he didn't witness one of the reasons, one of the conditions to become an apostle. He didn't witness it. He didn't witness Christ's death, nor resurrection or ascension.

That was a requirement to become an apostle. That's the reason why the Holy Spirit had to go teach Paul and show him all that stuff in visions and all out in the desert so that he could actually take on the role of an apostleship because he wasn't there. He didn't see it.

Those are the mouthpieces for Jesus Christ and they were especially credentialed, okay, by scripture. And that was all the credentials he needed, okay? He didn't put his resume on anything. He just said, hey guys, I've been told this.

I'm speaking on behalf of Jesus Christ and God sent me. So what are you gonna question? Those men were chosen for a special era of time. Ephesians 2.20 calls them foundational people.

They passed away with the passing of that era. They were the spiritual writers. They were the ones who laid down the apostles doctrine, which we're gonna get into.

They were the ones who spoke for Christ. They were ones who spoke divine revelation in those early years. They were creators of the church.

There's no vanity in Paul's heart. There's no self-glory. Matter of fact, he says, I'm so low on the totem pole.

I don't even know why I'm here. There was no vanity, no self-glory. There's no personal merit.

He said, I am what I am by the grace of God. And to Timothy, he said this, I was a blasphemer. I was a persecutor.

I'm the chief of sinners. I'm not worthy of this, but God somehow counted me worthy to make me an apostle. And he speaks for God.

He had a unique call. Jesus stopped him in his tracks on the Damascus road, blinded him with his own vision of his glory. And then he says, you're my man to go to the Gentiles.

Yeah. Can you imagine anybody with Paul's resume making application into any church today? No, because he carries a different message. He didn't go through seminary.

He's not preaching going to the cemetery, okay? He didn't learn the doctrine of the elite. If Paul walked into a church, that church would be so revolutionized. It would be unbelievable because of the power, the rich inside of him, the power that he accessed.

He had a unique relation to Christ. He was a bond slave. And he said, for me, for to me to live is Christ.

That's all I live for. He didn't, guys, that's what scripture tells us to do. Go to your list.

On the side of what you have to have, I live every day for Christ in all that I do. Now, look at your list. That's the only thing he knew to do in all of his life.

He had an incredible commission. He was dispatched. That's apostle, sent, okay? That's what the word apostle means is to be sent to carry out the gospel.

He had delegated power, the power of Jesus Christ, okay? You have the power inside of you as part of your richest toolbox. And he always recites this fact in every letter that he writes in the very beginning. Think about this if you study your Bible.

He says he's an apostle. The only exceptions is when he begins a letter by using his name and somebody else's name because that other person is not an apostle. So when he writes a letter by himself, he says, I, Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ.

Like if he says, Paul and Silvanus unto the church at so-and-so, he includes anybody else who's not an apostle. We can't use that term, but every case where he just mentions himself, he uses the term apostle. Now, 1 Corinthians 9.1, he says, I am not, am I not an apostle? He asks the question.

Have I not seen Jesus Christ, our Lord, which was one of the prerequisites of becoming the apostle? Yeah, he saw Jesus Christ because Jesus stopped him on the Damascus Road, which was the basic qualification. You had to personally see the risen Christ. Are you not? And that's the reason why Bishop Gators can't be an apostle because he hasn't seen Jesus Christ.

Are you not my work in the Lord? Aren't you proof of it? So it is that God took this man who was a Christian persecutor, persecuting the faith, turned him around and made him an apostle. And he was double-barreled in his authority. Verse 1.1, it came from Jesus and the will of God.

And those two are always in agreement. And so he states a double authority, the fullness of his authority from God Christ. Fullness, fullness, okay? Fullness means you have all of the Godhead authority.

By the way, what were the apostles' duties? Now, let me run them by you pretty quick so you can have this in your press. One was to preach the gospel, 1 Corinthians 1.17. Apostles were to preach the gospel. Number two, teach and pray, Acts 6.4, giving ourselves continually to the word and prayer, do miracles, 2 Corinthians 12.12, Acts 14.23. They were to build leaders for the church.

That was their task. And Paul was one of the double-barreled authority. Second, we see not only a double-barreled authority, but we see a double designation of believers.

Uh-oh. And this is very simple, and let me quickly go through this. It says at the end of verse 1, the saints who are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Jesus Christ.

Uh-oh, there's two groups of people, saints and faithful. He calls Christians by two terms, the saints and the faithful, and that covers both sides of the coin, okay? From God's side, he made us holy. You guys got to think about this.

From our side, we exercise faith. So from the double-barrenness of Christ and the Father, he calls out the saints in chapter two, in verse two, and because of the human people who are believers in Christ, he calls them faithful in Christ Jesus. So he covers both sides of the coin.

And it is by our virtue of being full of faith, fullness, everything's about fullness, fullness of faith that we have been made saints, not like the sainthood of the Catholic Roman Church, okay? This is true saints. This is a term given to believers in Christ. We're all saints.

From God's side, we're saints. We acted in faith toward Christ, so a double designation of believers. We are the saints.

We are the faithful. We have believed in Christ and he has made us holy. That's selling the deal, guys.

What else do you want? He just gave you everything on a silver platter. Here it is. We've been made holy in Christ.

We'll see more of that as we go through the book. So double authority, double designation of leaders, and then a double blessing in verse two. You're gonna like this.

You know that that would happen, didn't you? Grace to you in peace. That's a double blessing. Now, the first one, grace to you.

That's in peace. That's a double blessing. He that incidentally was typical, was his typical greeting.

Grace is the New Testament word for charis. It means kindness of God toward undeserving people. That's what grace means.

And when they met, they said grace to you. They didn't say good morning. They said grace to you.

You know, we really have missed that in how we deal with believers. We should do, after all the name, grace to you as a greeting, because what we're doing is we're passing on a blessing from Christ through us to them. It's a loving term.

It was like saying, I wish to be gracious to you. But more than that, it had a theological meaning. It meant something to them in their faith, which should mean grace.

It would mean the same thing to us. It was a reminder that they were what they were by grace. You have no life in Christ without grace, period, end of story.

Now, on the other hand, peace. Grace is the fountain of all blessings. It's out of his grace that everything comes.

It's just a reminder when you greet each other, to try to break some habits just after you've given a holy kiss, then say grace to you. Be biblical about how you greet people. You're supposed to be living like Christ.

And then there's another one, the double-minded greeting. The Old Testament word was shalom, Hebrew, and it means peace. Grace is the fountain, the foundation, and peace is the stream.

Because I have faith from God, I have peace with God, right? That's the other side of this. So when you go to somebody, instead of saying something dumb like, how are you? Say grace to you in peace, which would remind not only you, but would tell them that you were providing them a blessing in just your greeting. You see all this fullness, double stuff in the first two verses, you get the idea that you're going to get some tremendous riches coming your way out of the book of Ephesians.

It's all from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. You got the third one inside of you. Paul's message throughout the book of Ephesians is this, that you might understand God's grace, that you might possess his peace because you are part of his church.

And you have at your disposal his infinite riches. This is going to be a fantastic study, guys. I'm really, really looking forward to it.

So what I've tried to do is to give you a good dose of overview introduction to the book. We're going to go in and start breaking this down next week. So any questions, guys? Comments? Jim, did you say it was peace in the stream or stream? Peace is the stream.

Peace is the stream. It's the flow. Okay? Okay.

David. Jim, when you were just talking about that and just saying all you have to do is say grace to you. This would be a first step in me, for example, showing my faith to others and to be able to further his glory.

Oh, and they're going to see a massive change in you when you do that. And they're going to begin to now ask you questions. What happened? Which opens the door for you to share the gospel.

Yeah, still got a lot of study to do, but it's a good start. Yep. Anything else, guys? No? Was it a good fire hose? Victoria? Yes.

You know, in the times that I have attended a church or which has not been too many times, people will say, peace be with you. Is that just a, that's not something in the Bible. Yeah, it is.

It just said that peace is the stream by which grace flows. So peace be with you would be another way of expressing a greeting. Awesome.

Okay. If you're angry in your heart and you want to provide grace, it doesn't happen. The only way grace flows is when you have peace in your heart.

So peace becomes the stream, becomes the avenue that grace from Christ through you flows to somebody else. That's another way of looking at it. Do you think you always have to say something? Can't you just be the light in the moment? Sure.

And people sense it. Sure. Oh yeah.

Your features change. We talked about this. When you change your body, when your body is changed upon salvation, you have your DNA switches.

You now have this new body. You have a continence that's changed. So they will see it as long as your heart's right.

Jennifer. Okay. I know like in the most of the churches in our area, they do a little bit and they go peace be with you.

And then you lean over and shake the hands of your fellow person in the congregation. So is that, I mean, they even do that. That's a ritual.

That is a ritual in the church service. Has no meaning. That's like saying, that's like praying for your food.

God, thank you for this food. Bless it to my body. Bless those who cook it.

You could almost memorize a prayer for your food that is the same every day. It's meaningless. Okay.

Okay. There are no rituals in Christianity. None.

Right. Correct. Okay.

I just wondered about that when you said that. If you do not have a heart change, let's go through this. If you have no heart change or a heart that is in grace, then that is meaningless to the other person anyway.

Okay. So they never tell you in church when they ask you to do this, it's a ritual thing. It's something to get people to shake hands and to introduce themselves.

It's a networking activity. Pick up the phone and call somebody if you want to do that. Okay.

Okay. I just wondered about that when you were saying that. I mean, it really doesn't mean anything.

No, because it's a ritual. The church doesn't tell you, they don't give you the wherewithal to know really what you're trying to do. Yeah.

That's really kind of what I meant. I've been in church and peace be with you. I guess Jennifer had forgotten about the shake.

I'm like, what the heck is all this about? It seems so phony. Yeah, it's a ritual. I know, Victoria.

Yeah. Yeah, it's a ritual. Thanks for explaining that.

Sure, David. Going back to when you were talking about when Jesus comes and rules for the thousand years, is that when Satan is also released? No, Satan is bound for that thousand years. And at the end of the thousand years, you're going to get into it in Revelation, Satan's loose again to reign for a short, this is what scripture says, short season.

You don't know what that season is. Is that a week? Is it a month? Is it a year? Is it 10 years? A short season? Well, who knows what that is? But there'll be a period of time at the end of the thousand year reign that Christ will unleash Lucifer and all of his demons, to scatter around the earth again, to test you, to make sure that you're solid to go into his eternal kingdom. Right.

Thank you. Anything else, guys? We should have a white stone by then, right? Oh, you have a white stone if you're saved. Yeah.

You have a white stone if you're saved. But, guys, just, we Gentiles are in our glorified body. There's nothing going to happen to us, okay? Weologically walk through the scripture.

We're raptured. We get glorified bodies. Satan can't touch us.

What he's going to do is attack everybody that made it through the great tribulation, that were humans at the end of that, that still remain human in the millennium, okay? And Satan's going to get a field day with that. So, because they can still sin. Think about it.

In our glorified bodies, we can't sin. We have the ability, okay? But in our glorified body, it's not our nature to sin. Does that make more sense? Sam? I mean, this has a lot to do with people wanting to still jump back over the fence.

Yeah. You know, they think they're saved and then they go back and do what they were doing and still think they're saved. And it doesn't work that way.

Okay. All right. So now let's put this step one more time together and ratchet it up a little bit.

Okay. And I might confuse somebody. And if I do, I apologize upfront, but I'm not going to go into an in-depth teaching on this until we get into Revelation.

The Gentiles have left this world and become glorified bodies. The Gentiles will either take the mark of the beast or have their head cut off. So one way or the other, that decision to follow Satan or not will be done prior to the thousand-year reign.

And if your head's cut off, then basically you're going to go to God anyway. You're going to go to heaven. If you take the mark of the beast by scripture, it says you're done.

You get no second chances. All right. So from a Gentile point of view, our choices are going to be made before the millennium.

Okay. As Jews, that's a whole nother story. Okay.

Because the judgment of the great tribulation is for the Jews. Okay. And if they make it to the end, which there will be some making it to the end of all of that mess, they will go into the millennium as humanoids.

They don't get their glorified body. So when Christ allows Satan to go rampage, what he's doing is testing his nation. All right.

Because they're under the law at that point. So let us get into that when we get there, but that'll give you a foundational point of reference as you're doing self-studies examination or whatever. So that's, that'll get into that process.

But some of the Jews get glorified bodies, right? The ones that- The one- While they're false. Yeah. The ones that have been saved during the church age will be raptured.

The Gentiles and Jews are in one body. So- Okay. So they will get raptured at the same time.

They will get glorified bodies just like we will. Okay. All right.

Thank you. Anything else, guys? You think you're set now, ready to go? And line by line, precept by precept and going through Ephesians? Yes. Sure.

Yep. Okay. Well, that's what we're going to start.

We're going to, we're going to do, we're going to get into some background, a little history. We're going to get right into verses one through three. That's as far as we're going to get next week.

Versus one, two, three. And it'll be enough in identifying that. And then we'll go from there.

Okay. Bye guys. I love you guys.

I hope you guys had a good teaching. I hope it was meaningful to you. I hope you learned something and all that good stuff.

So let's pray and we'll call it a night. Father, thank you for your truth. Thank you for the ability to not only get into your word, but understand the meaning of what your Holy Spirit has written in your word of truth.

Father, we ask that basically we understand how to take the words that you gave us tonight to listen to and apply it to our lives. We hope that we're really in a mindful way positioning our lives to be totally obedient to you so that we could actually receive the riches today that you would offer the Jews in the millennium. And Father, may you give us the wisdom and understanding as we go through this so that we can actually be able to take and apply your doctrine, your truth in our lives so that we could actually pull down those riches and see them glorified in our lives.

Go with us in this turmoil state of this world, take and remove frustration, give us peace, which basically we really don't need to ask for God because you say you give it to us in part of the salvation anyway. So just give us the mindful wisdom that basically all we have to do is look to you and peace is right there. And we ask all these things in my name.

All right, guys, I will see you Sunday. We're gonna have just a Bible study and a prayer service. Come prepared for any testimony that you might wanna give.

It's just gonna be sort of a open session and come with basically prayer requests as well as those things that you've been blessed with. So that would be cool to share so everybody can see that. All right, guys, I will see you Sunday and I hope you have a good week.

Praise to you. Thank you.