

# **God's Secret: The Mystery**

**It's Christ in you,  
the hope of glory. Col 1:27**

**as taught by  
Neil Tolman**

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Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.  
2 Corinthians 4:1-7

## Introduction

The audio version of this introduction can be downloaded or listened to at:

[http://www.neilshouse.com/files/intro\\_mystery.mp3](http://www.neilshouse.com/files/intro_mystery.mp3)

It reads like an epic plot: Massive forces of evil bent on enslaving the human race; juxtaposed against a valiant hero that leads the faltering resistance. Treachery, treason, and murder: The perfect recipe for a mystery, intrigue and drama.

After setting the stage, the plot narrows to the hero's exploits and apparent defeat. The hero's faithful followers are in disarray and despair. But wait! The hero reemerges transformed, stronger and reenergized. The tide turns, the hero gathers his forces and comes thundering to victory in a final battle to put down the evil enemy.

Sound familiar? It should because this story line has been repeated over and over again in every culture and every category of storytelling. The plot line has been used since before there was writing. It appears in verbal traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years. The oldest Greek manuscripts which are attributed to the wandering poet Homer follow this formula. God says there is nothing new under the sun.

The human mind and emotions eagerly accept this story line wherever we find it. It is hard wired into us as we are actual players in God's great epic of the ages. The original plot, and basis for all other plots, the bible chronicles the epic account of the pride and fall of Satan. In his rebellious rage the devil instigated a failed coup. In his plunge from holiness to putridness the devil corrupted a portion of the heavenly forces and lured mankind into captivity and treason against God.

The Bible is the epic record of God's plan to redeem mankind and restore the state of paradise that we were created for. The story begins with mankind in the paradise of the Garden of Eden and it ends with God's people in the paradise of the new heaven and earth. The whole plot turns on the one hero, savior and king: Jesus.

The Bible tells the story of creation and the origin of all things and then sets the stage for the epic tale. From the moment Adam and Eve were escorted out of the protective presence of God the devil's intent was to destroy them. The bulk of the Bible story recounts the struggles of the bloodline that Jesus would come from. The devil tried to kill the bloodline but the people of promise were preserved over and over again by God's miraculous intervention. Through prophets God corrected, guided and gave hope to these struggling people.

And finally at the time appointed, the long awaited king arrived. He was able to cast out devils, heal the sick and even the wind and the waves obeyed him. He proclaimed the new kingdom but much to the dismay of his followers the devil was able to capture and kill the hero king Jesus.

His followers retreated and all seemed lost. But then hero Jesus reemerged transformed, stronger and reenergized. All expected him to draw his sword, call down legions of angels and establish the new kingdom with his small band of followers at his right and left. But the plot takes an unexpected twist. He left. The followers waited, hiding in fear of their angry religious neighbors.

But God had a secret weapon. The secret was hidden so deep that not even the angels suspected it. No one knew. The devil would not have killed Jesus if he would have known. We are always second guessing God and think He is going to be late to the rescue. But when the time was perfectly ripe, God plucked the person he had chosen to deliver his secret to from the stony and dusty road to Damascus.

As in most of the copy-cat sagas, the one selected was the very last person anyone would guess would be chosen. Saul of Tarsus, a radical religious nut was out on a jihad killing followers of Jesus. Sanctioned and certified by the leadership, he was zealously fulfilling his religious and civic duties. He was good at it. But God had better plans for him. Who better to demonstrate the depth and breadth of God's grace and forgiveness. To this unlikely man, who later became known as Paul, was given the secret that God had kept for so long and so carefully.

The secret is this: Jesus (our hero) who was crucified, died and was placed in a tomb got up from the dead, walked and talked to his followers and was seen by many others, and was taken to heaven and glorified and exalted as the king of kings and became the life giving spirit: Christ Jesus. That in of itself is a phenomenal turn of events but it gets even better: Christ, the life giving Spirit takes up residence in all who God has called into his family. The Bible specifically states in Colossians 1:27 that the secret (or mystery) is Christ in you, our only hope of glory.

This secret time period that we live in was not known before Paul received it by revelation. This time period is when Christ is gathering his body. The body of Christ, holy children of God with Christ in them walking and manifesting the love and power of Christ in this evil world. The devil killed the man Jesus but in doing so, millions of us have the power and authority of Christ living in us.

The secret of Christ in us is the first bold step toward reestablishing mankind to a paradise state. Although we still walk in this flesh and blood body that moulders and dies we are also now citizens of heaven in the spiritual realm. Our eternal life began the moment we were filled with the life giving Spirit: Christ in us.

In “Christ in us” we have received all spiritual blessings. Not a single one was left out. Everything that God can give has been given to us in Christ. Christ is our sufficiency, our supply, our forgiveness, our justification, our righteousness, our mercy, our love, our healing, our hope. In this fleeting flesh, we moulder away but Christ desires to shine and flow out of us. He is the treasure in this earthen vessel: The mystery, God's secret: Christ in You.

As Christ Jesus gathers his body, the devil is still at work stealing killing and destroying. From the moment the secret was revealed, the devil has worked over time to hide it. Paul wrote that if the gospel (the secret) was hidden to someone it was because the devil had blinded their minds. A sobering thought since almost all so called Christian religions deny the mystery Gospel of Christ in you. Few have even heard of it, let alone understand the tremendous ramifications of God's love, mercy and peace.

Proclaiming God's secret was the driving purpose of Paul. His letters in the Bible shout the mystery Gospel. For our time period the mystery is the only true gospel. Old Testament laws and taboos do not apply to us nor do the future prophecies of destruction. We are living in the secret. We are the body of Christ. Our hope is not based on our religious performance. We have been set free from religion. Our one and only hope is Christ in us which was Gods secret.

## The Mystery: God's Secret Revealed to Paul

The audio version of Neil Tolman teaching this subject can be downloaded or listened to at:  
[http://www.neilshouse.com/files/mystery\\_of\\_Paul.mp3](http://www.neilshouse.com/files/mystery_of_Paul.mp3)

The writings of Paul have always presented a challenge to those who are bound in performance based religion. From the beginning the Jewish church choked on Paul's Gospel of the mystery. Late in his life, Peter wrote to the churches in Galatia and surrounding areas, to warn them to pay close attention to the letters written by Paul. Peter refers to the letters of Paul as scripture.

Peter wrote his second letter late in his life when he knew that he was about to be killed by the Romans. Most place the date of writing at AD 67 which is about the same time as Paul wrote Second Timothy from prison in Rome. They were both executed under the Roman Caesar Nero's brutal rule shortly after these letters were written.

Peter's struggle to accept the gospel of grace to the gentiles is clearly documented in the book of Acts. Peter's famous roof-top oxymoron of "not so Lord" typifies his hesitancy to move on from the elitist laws of Moses to the all inclusive grace by faith of Paul's gospel. Yet he did accept the truth of the mystery even as most of the Jerusalem church remained zealous for the law. Those who deny the gospel of the mystery and discount the writings of Paul should give heed to the testimony of Peter. Read with me:

2Pe 3:15 And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom [revelation] [being] given unto him\*, hath written unto you;

\*Given unto him: Aorist Passive: Aorist "being given;" was given in the past with a continuous action to the present. Passive: It wasn't Paul's wisdom but wisdom that he was receiving by revelation.

2Pe 3:16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest,[pervert] as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.

18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Peter states that those who are unstable and unlearned pervert the scriptures including the writings of Paul which they don't understand to their great loss. He warns the Galatians and all other believers to not be led away with the error of the wicked. The wicked ones Peter refers to here are the judizers from the Jerusalem church who were aggressively attempting to snare and bind believers to the law. Peter said to beware! Peter tells them and us to stay steadfast in the things they were taught before by Paul.

If you find yourself struggling to understand "all that you should do" to be a good Christian, then you have been beguiled. Search out the gospel presented through Paul in the first three chapters of Ephesians. It will take you 5 minutes to read. I double dog dare you! Then take 10 minutes to read the little letter of Colossians. You will discover that Christ has done it all, once, for all. He nailed our sins and works to his cross.

I personally spent years in a supposedly grace based denomination's schools and seminary but was never taught the simplicity of the mystery. Instead I was taught "all that I should do" to be a good denominational pastor. When we discover that it's not about "all that I should do" but it's about all that HE has done. What a savior! What love! What a freedom! Not of works lest any man should boast .... What a God! The letter to Titus says: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"

Come along with me to the book of Romans, chapter eleven. We will begin in verse 25 and discover together the mystery that was revealed by revelation to Paul by Jesus the risen Christ. Paul does not want us to be ignorant of the mystery as most of Israel was.

Rom 11:25

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

One of my college professors believed that the mystery of Paul could not be known because it was after all, a mystery. Many religious groups take this position, being wise in their own conceits, but Paul clearly tells us that the mystery that was a secret kept from the time that the world began, had been revealed to him to

proclaim. The word is Strong's G3466 *mustērion*. Paul wanted us to not be ignorant of the mystery. He prayed for boldness to preach it, suffered jail, beatings and was stoned and left for dead because he insisted on preaching it. He finally was executed because he just would not be shut up. Paul's gospel of freedom in Christ so enraged the religious Jewish Christians, that they mercilessly persecuted him and his followers. The religious hierarchy sent missionaries out to mislead those that he taught. They plotted against him politically, religiously and privately. But Paul persisted. He said it was not in his power, but Christ in him.

Have you ever wished that the Bible would be more specific in defining what it was talking about? Well, when it comes to the mystery, it does. Paul himself defines clearly what the mystery is: Colossians chapter one starting in verse 25. While you are getting there let me list what he is going to tell us specifically about the mystery:

1. It was hidden from the ages and generations. No one knew.
2. It is NOW revealed to His saints. (Notice it is revealed to his saints, not to everyone. The natural man receiveth not the things of God. )
3. God will make known the riches of the glory of the mystery to His saints
4. The mystery is Christ in you. A simple statement but a phenomenal truth. Stop! Don't be adding anything. It is Christ in you!
5. Christ in you is THE hope of glory. (there is none other)
6. The mystery of Christ in you includes all who believe, Jew or gentile.

Colossians Chapter one verse 25: We are starting here in the middle of one of Paul's long compound sentences, it would be a good idea to go back and read the whole letter of Colossians to get a fuller understanding of the context. But, for now we will start in verse 25.

Col 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister,[diakonos - servant] according to the dispensation [administration or stewardship] of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil [finish or fill to the top] the word [logos]of God;

So God choose Paul to be his servant to finish the logoi, or God's Word with the gospel of the mystery:

Col 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages [eons] and from generations, but now is made manifest [made to appear] to his saints:

His saints can see it, experience it and live it but the natural man does not, can not comprehend nor experience the mystery.



Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles;[who believe] which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

So, our only hope of glory is Christ in you, which is the secret that God kept hidden for all ages and generations until He revealed it to Paul. What a surprise for the devil! Christ in every believer! Christ's power and authority in every believer; in every corner of the world at the same time. Look at First Corinthians Chapter two verse seven and eight.

1Co 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a *mystery*, even *the hidden wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

1Co 2:8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Now let's let Paul further enlighten us about the mystery. In Ephesians chapter three Paul explains the mystery further: We'll start reading in chapter three verse one:

Eph 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

Eph 3:2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

Eph 3:3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

Eph 3:4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

Do you see? Paul wants us to understand his knowledge of the mystery.

Eph 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Eph 3:6 That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Eph 3:7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Eph 3:9 And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Eph 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

Eph 3:12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Eph 3:13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Eph 3:15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Eph 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Eph 3:17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph 3:18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

Eph 3:19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Eph 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Eph 3:21 Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

We started a list earlier so, lets add to it: Here's some of what Paul has taught us so far:

1. The mystery is hinged upon "Christ in you" and all the other aspects and benefits of the mystery depend upon having Christ in you.
2. The mystery is God's secret that He kept until it was revealed to Paul by the ascended and glorified Christ Jesus.
3. No one knew about it. The prophets didn't know, Moses didn't know, the devil did not know and the disciples did not know while Jesus was walking among them.
4. It is NOW revealed to His saints. His saints are those who have Christ in them. If you have Christ in you, you are one of God's saints and have the mind of Christ!
5. The mystery of "Christ in you" includes the gentiles as well as the Jews, who believe.
6. Those who have Christ in them are a part of God's family, the body of Christ.

The secret that was kept is the whole church age and all that it encompasses. The prophets of old told of the coming king, the messiah, the conquering warrior, coming to liberate and set up his kingdom. Jesus came proclaiming the kingdom of God. His disciples were looking for the prophesied king. That's all they could see because the mystery had not been revealed yet. The conquering Jesus that was prophesied in the Old Testament and the setting up of an earthly kingdom will happen in a future age as shown in the book of Revelations.

We however, are in the time of the mystery. We live in a secret age not known to the ancients. The whole church age, the time of grace that we now live in was not prophesied nor known until it was given to Paul. There is not one single reference in the Old Testament referring to the body of Christ. There is no model of design or example to follow.

The called out ones, those born of God's seed, the body of Christ, the ones called according to His purpose in this mysterious age are the church. The Old Testament hierarchy does not apply. The laws and taboos of the older ages have passed away having been nailed to the cross.

It behooves us to listen to the words of Peter: “...even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the revelation given unto him, hath written unto you; in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; which they that are unlearned and unstable pervert as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Beware lest ye also, be led away with their error. Instead, grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The letters of Paul give us the revelation for this age. The alpha and the omega, everything from the beginning to the end of our age is all about “Christ in you, the hope of glory.

The great mystery is not a mystery any more if you have Christ in you.

## **A New Race: The Body of Christ**

The audio version of Neil Tolman teaching this subject can be downloaded or listened to at:  
[http://www.neilshouse.com/files/new\\_race.mp3](http://www.neilshouse.com/files/new_race.mp3)

That which is Spirit is Spirit, and that which is flesh is flesh. Spirit and flesh are at odds with one another. How easily we get drawn into thinking that fleshly things are somehow spiritual. We have two separate births. First we are born of the flesh. We inherit our characteristics and fleeting life span from our parents. The flesh will die. The second birth is of the Spirit. Our Spiritual self will never die. We inherit all of the characteristics and eternal life from our spiritual parent, God.

We each are the consequence of a unique mixture and blending of DNA that makes us irreparably part of a human fleshly family. Every human being since Adam and Eve have inherited flawed DNA that has a limited life span. Like it or not we are a part of the seed of Adam. The indelible stain of sin is not just skin deep, but instead is thoroughly part of every molecule of our make up.

The human race was driven from the presence of God and barred from approaching again. God placed armed angels at the gates to prevent the tainted humans from trying to return to defile His holy and undefiled presence. Do you remember the tower of Babel? Mankind tried. After Adam and Eve's treason and spiritual death all that was left was the fleshly hulk that is enmity to God who is Spirit. The fleshly man has absolutely nothing that is capable of pleasing or impressing God.

Jesus came to reconcile mankind to God. He came to bridge the gap between unholy and Holy. But flesh is still flesh and unholy. God as Spirit is still Holy. Jesus Himself said that Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Jesus paid the ultimate once for all time, once for all people price for reconciliation. But did he make flesh holy? No! Did he remove the sword swinging angels from the Garden of Eden? No! Did he make even one human's fleshly body live forever? No!

Jesus came to create a new race: A new holy race of man. Not of this world but instead out of heaven: A new race born of God's seed that inherits the characteristics and life span of the Father God. This new and holy race could not be generated by the contaminated fleshly seed of Adam. But it could be generated by the spiritual seed of God: The Spirit of Christ which God has placed in each one of his new children. Each one of us who are born of God's seed have the Spirit of Christ in us. And God has placed each and every one of us in Christ in heaven lies at His own right hand.

God's new human race is Spiritual. God's new holy family is not of this world but instead we are a heavenly people. We are heirs of God, sharing fully with Jesus the Christ. Our compatibility with God is in the spiritual realm. Our inheritance is in the spiritual realm. We have all of God's blessings which flow out of the spiritual realm. Spiritual, we are born of untainted, unstained seed. We were born holy and will always be holy.

Yet, for now we inhabit this defective fleshly body. Our flesh rages against the Spirit of Christ within us because they are irreconcilable and war one against another. In our mind in every moment, either one is the victor or the other. They cannot and do not agree. For our sojourn here on earth we have been given the task of renewing our mind to the Spirit. It is our choice whether we are lead by the flesh or the Spirit. All else God has completely and decisively done for us. He chose us, called us, birthed us, loved us, gave His Son for us, adopted us, blessed us, empowered us and gave us a new name. Our one part is to choose to live in the light of the Spirit instead of the darkness of the flesh.

Yet from the moment the first person was born again and the new holy family of God appeared, the flesh has raged, befuddled and mislead generations of saints. Where do you find members of God's holy family? In the strangest of places: John McCain tells of his brief experience with a fellow believer dressed as an enemy guard. I've a distant relative now gone who told of praying with a dieing saint he had shot who was wearing the uniform of the unthinkable evil Hitler. We find ourselves in the midst of political, religious, and business organizations that are entirely flesh. We live in a fleshly world. We walk around in fleshly bodies that are moldering away. Our old man is flesh but the real "live forever" spiritual man is NOT of the flesh.

We are Spirit yet our unrenewed mind is easily drawn into fleshly endeavors. We have all submitted ourselves at one time or another to fleshly religion. From the beginning fallen man has attempted to regain the presence of God. The angels at the gate with flaming swords have not fallen asleep. Flesh still can not enter into the Spiritual realm nor can the flesh please God. Flesh is still contrary to and incompatible with the Spirit of God. Yet fleshly religion continues to build abuse based organizations that run entirely on self righteousness to lure and subjugate mankind. Jesus came to set us free from religion of sin and death. God is Spirit and those who worship Him do so in Spirit and truth. Not the flesh.

We must first see and then walk in the freedom that only the Spirit of Christ can provide.

## Do or Done?

The audio version of Neil Tolman teaching this subject can be downloaded or listened to at:  
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In Mark Chapter One verse 40 we will see Jesus reach out, touch a leper and miraculously heal him. But the part of the story that is usually passed over is that the healed man was required by the law to offer a sacrifice, and get the blessing of a priest before he could be declared clean enough to rejoin the community. Jesus healed him but the law still was the task master that had to be paid. Read along with me:

Mark 1:40-44

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

Please note that Jesus healed the man physically but then sent him to a priest because under the law he was not ceremonially clean until he performed the prescribed ritual and sacrifice. This is performance based religion at its best, but the leper and Jesus were under the law.

Many think that we are still under some form of the same law in our time period. Denominational structures are based on the concept of the Jewish Priesthood. The Priesthood's function was to administer the law and mediate between God and the "common" man.

The Roman church was set up in the third century combining paganism and the Christian religion. The Roman priesthood has blended roots in Judaism and Pagan Temple worship. The temples, robes and other vestments of highly organized paganism were incorporated with the loose network of Christian

communities to create a religion controlled by Caesar. There have always been a few believers that refused to be sucked into the vortex of performance based religion. Often these believers have been persecuted by religious organizations.

As Protestant groups splintered off the Roman church, the hierarchy was retained and the rituals were modified but many of the pagan and law based traditions continued. In the denominational churches the roots are evident in the clergy, hierarchy, tithe, ritual, and performance based religion. Paul warned the believers in Colossi to beware of such. Turn with me to the book of Colossians chapter two, verse 8. I'll give you a couple of seconds to get there. ....

Colossians 2:8-14

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened (or made alive) together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

How did he do that?

- 1 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances  
(He rubbed out or erased the law)
- 2 He blotted out the ordinances that was against us,
- 3 He blotted out the ordinances which was contrary to us,
- 4 and He took the ordinances (or law) out of the way,
- 5 nailing the ordinances to his cross;



The original disciples in Jerusalem knew and walked with Jesus the man, the king who was proclaiming his kingdom to the Jews. The Jews were under the law, Jesus was under the law and his purpose was to complete and fulfill the law. He was the sacrifice once for all under the terms of the law that redeemed all who believe from the curse of the law. He rubbed the law out, erased it and took it out of the way.

The age that we live in was not discussed, but just before his ascension, Jesus told the disciples that they should wait until the day of Pentecost at which time they would receive power when the comforter or Holy Spirit would be sent.

The misunderstanding of the disciples is plainly written. Moments before the ascension, the disciples asked Jesus if he would then establish the earthly kingdom. This account is in Acts chapter one verse six.

Acts 1:6-9

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

So, the disciples huddled in fear, waiting and praying in preparation for the physical kingdom they still assumed would be established on the day of Pentecost. While they waited, they chose one of their number as a replacement for Judas. Of course the replacement was never mentioned again in the Bible.

On the day of Pentecost the comforter did indeed come. The believers were filled to overflowing with the indwelling Spirit, but they did not understand the significance of "Christ in you" because it had not been fully revealed yet. They continued as before as Jews under the law that now had the comforter within them. They continued in the temple, sacrificing, and doing all the law required. The church grew dramatically as Jews believed and swelled the ranks.

The Jews considered them a heretical sect, but still Jews. They considered themselves still Jews but a new sect that recognized the Messiah but continued

following the law. This is why Peter was so taken aback when God told him to kill and eat unclean animals in his vision on the roof top where he said: “Not so Lord!”

Paul on the other hand did not walk with and learn from the man Jesus who was living under the law. The law had been completed, rubbed out and taken out of the way and was no longer in effect. Paul was met on the road to Damascus by the glorified Lord who was now the life giving spirit. (1 Cor 15:45)

On his famous trip to Damascus, Paul was met by the lord of lords, the king of kings who was not limited by the laws of Moses or a physical earth-suit. This Christ Jesus is the supplier and author of the gospel of the mystery given to Paul. Thus Paul could truly say that he was a messenger (or in the KJV apostle) of Christ, not of men or by man.

The good news of the mystery given to Paul is not the same good news of the kingdom that was proclaimed in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. If we import the law period into the present grace period we might as well read the commands to build an ark given to Noah into our period. (So, how are you doing with that ark you are building in your back yard?)

The body of Christ, Christ in you, the hope of glory was not known or told before it was given to Paul. A clear and direct revelation for our time period has been given in the Pauline epistles. The rest of the bible is given us to understand the history, the scope and background of the revelation provided to and for us. Our relationship with God through Christ is clearly set out in the first three chapters of Ephesians and is summarized in Ephesians 2:8-10:

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Contrast that with the procedure given to the leper by Jesus in Mark chapter one verse 44. Jesus told him: “Shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded.”

Do you see the procedure and performance?

1. Go to a priest who will intercede for you.
2. Bring a sacrifice to offer.
3. The priest will offer your sacrifice for you.

Everything was conditional. Everything was based on performance. If a healed leprous Jew did everything according to the laws of Moses they would be declared clean. No sacrificial offering? No justification.

During the Gospel time period a go-between was necessary to receive from God and required specific works. In our time period the work and sacrifice has already been done and is complete. It's not of our works: There is nothing we can do to add to the completed work and sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. He said "it is finished. And, that's just exactly what he meant.

Our relationship of grace through faith, with an indwelling Christ is a startling contrast to the normal works based gospel that permeates the modern denominational church. Performance based religion only makes you tired. Works based performance does nothing to help your relationship with God. In fact trying to earn status within the church and working to achieve holiness is completely contrary to the gospel of grace.

Are you still submitting yourself to a priest, pastor or someone you perceive to be holier than you and then doing what they command or what Moses commanded just like Jesus told the leper to do? What are you doing to be more acceptable to God? Do you think if you could just get holier that God would like you better? Ephesians says that it's not of works. It's not about our works but His. According to Colossians 1:27, we have Christ in us. There is no other human that is holier than us, or more worthy than us, or more blessed than us. We, like Paul before us, have an intimate, always ready and always listening Christ in us. Ask him: He's already done it for you.

Consider the many self appointed "prophetic" healers and pontificators holding great meetings and seminars to play the part of the holy priest receiving your sacrifices and doling out blessings if you work hard enough and bring your offering. These performances are based upon the gospel of works and not on the gospel of grace. They hope you will "pay no attention to the man behind the curtain." We live in the time of grace, the time of law and performance is past. The time of His return is nearing.

Performance based religion masquerades in a multitude of innocent sounding methods, programs and organizations. It can be very subtle and always seems so holy, but it snares you. We have been called into the body of Christ, a living and breathing entity made up of all who are called. There is only one head and only one healer. Of course all who have Christ in them have the authority and power of the one healer because we have Christ in us. None have any more or less than the next. We are all one. God is no respecter of persons.

We have been given the word of God and are instructed to rightly divide it. In spite of a myriad of translations, versions and differing manuscripts, the simplicity of the gospel of grace shines out, proclaiming the mercy and love of God, manifested in the completed work of Christ. Based on the completed work of Christ Paul can triumphantly trumpet and shout: It is NOT of our works! We are indeed the product of Christ's works. Anything that we may do that can be classified as good works originate in Christ, because that is what he called us to do. Not our own works, but his. Our calling, our life as a believer is to allow Christ to live in and through us to carry out his ministry of reconciliation.

Do you see? It is not my ministry but his. It is not your ministry but his. How often we hear the discussion: "I'm not sure what my gift or calling is, God just hasn't shown me." Read the Book! We have the ministry of reconciliation. We have his ministry. There is no question what we are called to do. Yes! Each and every believer is called to the ministry. Each and every believer is ordained with the highest calling any will ever receive: It is Christ in you! It just doesn't get any better than that.

Yet religion from the very first, established a hierarchy of callings and false positions to rule over others. The only way we can stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has set us free is to know who we are and what we have been called into; and choose not to be drawn into the devilish trap of performance based religion.

We as believers are called into the body of Christ. The body has only one head and only needs one head. When believers come together it is a meeting of the blessed, the meeting of the called out ones, to encourage, build up and comfort one another. When one elevates him or herself above the others they have assumed headship. There is only one head.

Colossians 1:27 tells us that we have Christ in us, the hope of glory. Our hope, our direction, our very life flows from Christ in us. Our hope, in fact the only hope in this world is Christ in you. The only escape from the bondage of performance based religion starts in Colossians 1:27 and Ephesians 2:8-10. Soak in these verses and pull your understanding of the rest of the bible in line with these simple truths:

1. It is NOT of our works.
2. It is by God's gift of grace
3. God's grace-gift comes by faith.
4. Our faith is a gift from God. (It's not our works)
5. God's grace gift is Christ in us.
6. Christ in us in our hope of glory.

## In Christ

The audio version of Neil Tolman teaching this subject can be downloaded or listened to at: [http://www.neilshouse.com/files/In\\_Christ.mp3](http://www.neilshouse.com/files/In_Christ.mp3)

One of the great areas of debate among the denominations is the meaning of the phrases "in Christ" and "Christ in." Many teach that they mean the same thing. But that belief defies the rules of language. Some groups say that "Christ in" refers only metaphorically to our position as a Christian because Jesus died for us just as the blood of a goat metaphorically covered sins of the Old Testament Israelite.

The same groups believe and teach that "in Christ" refers to the state of our fellowship with God, which is dependent on our works. If you are living a holy life, then you are said to be "in Christ." If you are not doing so well today, then you are no longer in Christ.

It's like a toy whistle I had when I was a kid. My grandfather made a wooden whistle for me that was a round tube with a slot along the top. Inside was a wooden ball that would roll along the inside of the tube depending how hard you blew.

I had great fun with that whistle and was sent out side frequently because I liked it far more than my mother did. I called it music but my mom called it noise.

I accidentally sat on the whistle and cracked it so if I blew too hard the ball would pop out. Without the ball inside it was no longer a whistle but just a stick.

Many believe that our being "in Christ" is similar. They think that as long as we control our selves and don't blow too hard we stay "in Christ." But if you get a little rambunctious, Pop! You are no longer "in Christ!" What a miserable misunderstanding of the love and mercy of God. What a sad estimation of God's completed work in Christ.

Read with me in second Corinthians Chapter Five verse seventeen:

2Co 5:17 Therefore if any man *be in Christ, he is a new creature*: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2Co 5:19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

So, Just exactly does the phrase "in Christ" mean? The word "in" is translated from the Greek word "en" which is spelled epsilon - neu. "In" is a preposition that indicates the position of the subject inside the object. For instance when I say "the ball is in the whistle." Ball is the subject. Whistle is the object and the preposition "in" gives us the position which is "inside." Note that the ball is not beside, on, or upon the whistle but is contained inside the whistle. So when the bible talks about something being "in Christ," it means that something is contained "inside Christ"

Let me explain that in a different way. If I said in the cabinet there are 12 plates you would know that the cabinet contains 12 plates. In the two verses that we just read, we see the phrase "in Christ" twice. Verse 17 speaks of "any man" being "In Christ." Think of that phrase as: If any man be contained in Christ. And think of "God was in Christ" in verse 19 as God was contained in Christ. If this concept troubles you think about the verse that says: For in him (that is in Christ) dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily. Col 2:9

God was "IN CHRIST" reconciling us unto himself, not imputing our trespasses to us but instead imputed our trespasses to Christ.

So .. If we *be in Christ*, we are a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Let's take a walk through a few of the verses that use the phrase "IN CHRIST," to see if we are like the little ball in my whistle that pops out.

Let's start in Romans 3:24:

Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Our redemption or full payment of our ransom is "in Christ Jesus." We are made righteous by the grace of God which he free gives to the redeemed "in Christ." The bible tells us that we were dead in trespasses and sin, living according to the god of this world, Satan, and were without hope. But God who is rich in mercy, in Christ paid our ransom in full. In Christ we are redeemed.

Look at the sentence structure and notice the parts of the sentence. First note that redemption is "in Christ Jesus." Then notice that redemption or the paid ransom is the doorway that grace comes through. He redeemed us while we were yet sinners. God in Christ redeemed or set us free from the devil's grip so that the grace of God could declare us justified or purified in Christ.

Rom 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Because we are IN Christ there is NO condemnation because IN Christ we walk according to the Spirit not the flesh. Look carefully at this sentence. It literally says there is not even one adverse sentence to those who are IN Christ Jesus. Not even one ZERO, ZIP, NONE. Now the second half of the sentence: They who are IN Christ walk according to the spirit, not the flesh. Look at verse 14:

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Rom 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

So does God blow his children out the end of his whistle and POP we are no longer his children? Look at verse 2:

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Contained "In Christ Jesus" is the law or principle of the Spirit of Life. The spirit of life which is in Christ has made me free from the law of sin and death! In fact the bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:45 that Jesus became the life giving spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

Since we are here in Romans eight, let go to verse 39:

Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"In Christ Jesus our lord" is the love of God. 1st John 4:8 tells us that God is love. Agape love is the very nature of god. "In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col 2:9

Let's back up and start in verse 38:

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God

Which is IN Christ. So, It doesn't appear that we can pop out.

Well ... let's pop on over to Romans chapter twelve verse 5:

Rom 12:5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

"IN Christ" is ONE Body. He is the one and only head, we are the body. The one body is "IN Christ." Outside of Christ there is no body only confusion. The body cannot exist without the head. "In Christ" is the body. If we are "in Christ" we become part of the one body. Every one of us are members of one another in this one body that is in Christ. "IN Christ" there are no divisions, no other heads, but only one head and one body.

Lets move on to first Corinthians: I think we have worn out the whistle and can safely retire it.

1Co 1:30 But of him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

So we see here that God placed us IN CHRIST. And in Christ Jesus there is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. All the attributes that religion has had us working to attain, is freely "made unto us", or rather "caused to become us" in Christ Jesus. In Christ we have wisdom and righteousness and we have been purified and ransomed in full.

There are many passages of scripture where the phrase "IN CHRIST" is used. A more detailed study of all the verses would provide you with a detailed list of the many blessings that are ours in Christ. We cannot look at them all today but stay with me for a few more verses from the book of Ephesians. In Ephesians chapter two we find a definitive description of how we came to be in Christ. This is an extremely important concept because if God has already done something it is futile for us to try to do it. But if God tells us to do something then He will not do it. Do we strive to be "in Christ?" Does our work keep us "in Christ?" Look at verse six. If ever there was a verse that needs to be memorized, this is it.



Eph 2:6 And (God) hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

Verse 4, 5, and 6 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

But God. It's simple really. God raised us up together. Together. None were raised higher than another but we were raised together. The Greek is literally "[God] *roused us from death together*". Once raised God MADE us to sit. We did not rouse ourselves from death but God raised us up and God caused us to sit – "IN Christ" in the heavenlies. Christ sits at the right hand of God. God has placed us "in Christ" so we are at the right hand of God "in Christ." I don't think we can blow hard enough to get the ball to pop out of this whistle. God put us there: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:5

One more, .....

Eph 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

ALL really does mean all.....

Here is another simplistic illustration but please humor me. Imagine for a moment that Christ is a large closet. Now let's think about some of the things that are "IN Christ." Or, in that closet. In our closet is stored all wisdom and prudence. On the shelf next to wisdom is all spiritual blessings. On the top shelf is authority over all principalities and powers. The shelves are also loaded up with us because the bible says we are "IN Christ."

So .... in Christ are all of these people and things. Go search out the bible and find all the blessings that are yours "in Christ" and put them in our closet. It is a tremendous discovery to find out that you are in Christ. But now we have a closet full, but we are in the closet with everything else.

So ... as the dentist said to me, open wide! Get ready to swallow our closet and everything in it. Because not only are we IN Christ but we have Christ in us. Fortunately we do not have to swallow a closet because God has placed "Christ in Us" which is our hope. Everything that is "in Christ" is in us. Everything. Nothing left out. Every gift, manifestation and blessing that is in Christ is in us.

Christ, who contains all the things we just talked about and more, is IN us. As a believers, who are born again of God's seed, sons and daughters of God, have readily available to us all spiritual blessings because they are in Christ and Christ is in us.

Now, back to the ball popping out of the whistle:

The knowledge of being in Christ and having Christ in you completely destroys the law based religious mind set that continued in the Jerusalem churches and fought so hard to destroy the teaching of the mystery. The performance based, lawful mindset pervades the organized church of today. The difference between performance and Christ in you is the difference between bondage or freedom in Christ.

The manifestations are an *exhibition* or revealing of Christ in us. The authority and power that is exhibited in the manifestations are the authority and power of Christ in us.

In of ourselves, we have no power, it is the power of Christ in us. Devils must flee because we have Christ in us. Word of knowledge, word of wisdom and discerning of spirits is information we receive into our physical mind in an exhibition of Christ in us. When we believe the revelation and speak to the mountain; the mountain moves by the power of Christ in us. It is about Christ living his life in and through us.

The nine manifestations are not the nine gifts. They are the nine ways the one gift (which is Christ in you) is exhibited. Calling the manifestations gifts causes confusion. All the talk about "I have the gift of tongues" or "my gift is prophecy" indicates a misunderstanding of what or who is being manifested. Most of what we have seen public meetings is the manifestation (exhibition) of self interests and deceit.

OK .... One more quick blow of the whistle to wrap up:

Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is "Christ in you," the hope of glory:

We are in Christ and Christ is in us which is our hope of glory. Our purpose, our calling is to allow Christ to live in and through us, manifesting the love of God in the renewed mind. God bless you.

## Master Builder

The audio version of Neil Tolman teaching this subject can be downloaded or listened to at: <http://www.neilshouse.com/files/masterbuilder.mp3>

There was a time in my life that I made my living managing large construction projects. Throughout my career as a project manager and contractor I have supervised the building of many houses, warehouses, office buildings, and other projects. My largest project was a 14 story high-rise condo project overlooking the Chesapeake Bay. The blueprints and specifications for the project filled the back of a pick-up truck. In a tall building of that type, accuracy is vital.

For instance if the foundation were to be 1/10th of an inch off, by the time you reached the roof the discrepancy becomes 14 feet. Of course this type of mistake was unacceptable. I had a team of engineers that double-checked and confirmed the accuracy of the construction on a daily basis. The owner of the project had an architect on site throughout the construction to make sure that the plans were followed. The architect was consulted frequently because often we needed clarification and adjustments along the way. We dared not change or adjust anything without the architect's approval because every aspect of the building was impacted by the smallest of adjustments.

In our bible text today we find Paul, God's architect, or in the KJV, master builder explaining again, the foundation to the believers in Corinth.

1Co 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Paul by revelation, calls himself the "master builder" In the Greek master builder is *ar-khee-tek'-tone*, *Strong's #G753*. It literally means a "chief constructor or architect." An architect in the person that understands the owner's plans and desires, then designs the building and supervises the construction.

God Gave the revelation of the mystery to Paul. The mystery is God's plan and desire for the body of Christ in the time period that we live. The Mystery or

literally in the Greek, the secret, was hidden from everyone but God until it was given to Paul. Paul's mission was to proclaim god's secret.

The secret contains the blue print for the new society, new race of people, God's people, that starts with being born of God's seed, incorruptible seed, Christ in you, the hope of glory. Christ is the foundation that the body of Christ is set upon.

If you miss the foundation of Christ in you, you miss the rest of the secret. There is only one door to the sheepfold, one shepherd, one head of the body and it is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Fleshly performance based religion climbs over the fence into the sheepfold and works really hard to build a body with many heads and a foundation of flesh. A foundation of flesh misses the whole point of Christianity. The point is Christ in you the hope of glory. It really is not about us. It is about Him.

In the second and third chapters of first Corinthians, Paul reminds Corinthian believers and us to return to the foundation of Christ.

Read along with me, starting in 1st Corinthians Chapter two verse one:

1Co 2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

↓  
G3142 *marturion* (mar-too'-ree-on) *evidence given*

Paul was very aware of who the head of the body was. He did not show up in a chrome plated chariot and diamond stud earrings. It was not about him ... it was about the revelation of the mystery given to him by Christ Jesus.

Let's continue in verse 2:

1Co 2:2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

1Co 2:3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

1Co 2:4 And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration (manifestation) of the Spirit and of power:

Paul was not a fancy worded preacher of the flesh, but instead was busy sowing to the spirit with constant and evident manifestation of the spirit of Christ. He wanted people to believe, be born of God's seed and begin to walk in the power and manifestation of Christ in you. Paul was not trying to build himself a "ministry" or a power base of tithers and groupies.

1Co 2:5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

1Co 2:6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: (mature) yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught:

The princes of this world will always come to nothing because they are based entirely on the flesh. We are of the Spirit and should be walking in the spirit, listening and acting on the Christ in us.

1Co 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

1Co 2:8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

There it is!

1Co 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

This is a quote from Is 64:4. God kept a secret that he was not going to share until he gave it to Paul: Now it is freely and openly given to us by way of His spirit:

1Co 2:10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

1Co 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

For those of us that are coming out of various performance based religions, this verse is a breath of freedom! No man or woman knows what is inside you any

more than we know what the inner thoughts of God are unless he tells us. There are so many religious fools running from church to church giving "words" and "prophesies" to tell others about their "curses" sins and what to do. What a bunch of who-hah!

1Co 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

1Co 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

The natural man, the man of the flesh can only sow to the flesh and reap of the flesh. We have been given the gift of Christ in us with all spiritual blessing in the packet! The things of God are spiritually discerned; word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits.

1Co 2:15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

Becoming spiritual is not an achievement after getting bonked on the head by some crazy evangelist, nor is it caught like a cold from some tattooed prophet. He that is spiritual is one who is walking in the spirit, manifesting Christ in us, listening to the revelation of God, studying to understand and rightly divide the word of truth and allowing Christ to live in and through us.

1Co 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Which of us presumes to tell God what to do? ... But we have Christ in us the hope of glory!

1Co 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ.

1Co 3:2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able.

The folks in Corinthians were so focused on fleshly things that the spiritual things fell by the wayside. We see the birth of the denominations, divisions, and the following of men instead of following the one and only head.

1Co 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

1Co 3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

1Co 3:5 Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

Paul tells us here that he and Apollo's were not the point, and that they were only servants delivering the word of God:

1Co 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

1Co 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

It's about God not us. Our purpose, our calling is for Christ to live in and through us.

1Co 3:8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

1Co 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building.

1Co 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1Co 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1Co 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1Co 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1Co 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1Co 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1Co 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

1Co 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

1Co 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

1Co 3:20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

1Co 3:21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

1Co 3:22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

Eph 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

1Co 3:23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

If God Be for us, Who can be against us??

The mystery, God's secret, Christ in you: The Foundation.

The hope of glory!



## It's Christ in You, The Hope of Glory!

The audio version of Neil Tolman teaching this subject can be downloaded or listened to at:

<http://www.neilshouse.com/files/treasurechristinyou.mp3>

2Co 4:1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2Co 4:2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2Co 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

2Co 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2Co 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

2Co 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2Co 4:7 But we have this **treasure** in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Paul tells us here that we have a valuable treasure in our earthen vessels. Within us is this treasure that exudes the power of God. The power of God is supposed to manifest from us in spite of the fact that we are clay pots that are far from perfect. So just what is this Treasure than Paul writes about?

Peter called it “the GIFT:

1Pe 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

1Pe 4:11 If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Peter also called the treasure the Spirit of glory:

1 Peter 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

John Calls the Treasure The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the spirit of truth and the anointing:

The Spirit:

1 John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

The Comforter:

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Spirit of truth:

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

The anointing:

1 John 2:27 But the anointing (charisma) which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

Luke writes about the Holy Spirit which is some times translated Holy Ghost in the King James. Luke also calls the treasure within our earthen bodies the spirit of the Lord.

## The Holy Ghost:

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

## the Spirit of the Lord:

Acts 8:39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

## Paul explains the treasure in more detail throughout his epistles:

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

## The Spirit of God:

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

## The Spirit of Christ:

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

## The Spirit of life:

Romans 8:10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

## The quickening Spirit:

1 Corinthians 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickeningspirit.

## The Spirit of faith:

2 Corinthians 4:13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

The Spirit of wisdom and revelation:

Ephesians 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Spirit of his Son:

Galatians 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Holy Spirit of promise:

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

The Spirit of Jesus Christ:

Philippians 1:19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

The Spirit of love, and of a sound mind:

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Unto the Spirit of grace:

Hebrews 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Col 1:27: It is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

The Treasure, the Charisma or Gift, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ. All refer to the same thing: Col 1:27: It is Christ in you the hope of glory!

All the power, wisdom, prudence, love, mercy and grace of God is wrapped up in the one gift: Christ in you the hope of Glory. ALL; I say again; ALL spiritual blessings are in the one and only grace gift: Christ in you, The hope of Glory.

This is God's secret that was hidden from before the foundation of the earth that was first revealed to Paul. Paul calls it the "mystery."

Col 1:26-27 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

This mystery of Christ in you was and is such a dramatic victory that the bible tells us that Satan would not have crucified Jesus if he would have known about Christ in us. .

*The Treasure, The Gift of Grace, Holy Spirit, The Spirit of Christ: Christ in you the hope of Glory: Charis = Gift: charis grace gift: Far more than a good feeling!*

When you read in the scripture of receiving the grace of God it is saying much more than we have been taught. The theological definition of Grace is unmerited favor, but that is merely a human definition. In God's wonderful grace that was shed upon us is far more than a sticky feeling or passing merciful moment between fits of wrath. When God extended His grace to us it came as a package far beyond our comprehension. Grace is the very nature of God. His plan was to extend the grace Gift to us from the before we were born. God's grace gift is Christ in you the hope of glory.

The Raging debate and postulation about which and how many of the manifestations of Holy Spirit are available to a born again person becomes a silly question when you realize you have Christ in you. How many spiritual blessings, wisdoms and manifestations, does Christ have? Well .... ALL of them of course. It's Christ in you the hope of Glory. The whole goal of the believers life is to allow Christ to live through us. Our prideful postulation about "OUR power and our manifestations are works of the flesh and devilish. The weekly charade of false prophets and made up prophecies are just a flim-flam show designed to appear holy. If you recall, Moses put on the veil to hide the fact that the brightness of the glory was fading from his face.



Act 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

2Co 5:18 And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

### The Effects of Grace: Charisma

The Effects of Grace are Free:

It is Christ in you, The Comforter, Holy Spirit  
You were/are/will be filled to overflowing  
with the effects of grace (charisma)  
Whether 50 seconds or 50 years:  
The effects of grace are there.  
If you have received charis  
charisma is the result.

The Effects of Grace are Equal:

God is no respecter of persons  
If one got it all have it  
If Paul had it you have it  
It is Christ in you

The Effects of Grace are Powerful:

It is Christ in you  
New life that is eternal  
New purpose which to serve  
New power to build up, encourage and comfort one another  
New Power to stand against the devil.

The Question Of What We Do To Serve:

Service Gifts (*Charisma* - Effects of Grace)

Apostle, evangelist, prophet, shepherd, teacher, mercy, giving and so on .... What effects of grace flow from you? Where ever you are, whoever you are just start

-serving God and your fellow believers in the love of God; from your "belly shall flow rivers of living water." John 7:38

The Question Of How We Serve:

Manifestations: (*Charisma* - Effects of Grace) The Comforter always builds up and encourages toward comfort. I Cor 14:3

Worship Effects of Grace:

*Tongues*  
*Interpretation of Tongues*  
*Word of Prophecy*

Open your mouth and speak. You breath, you move your mouth but God gives the utterance. If you have Christ in you,; *charisma* is ready to flow.

Revelation Effects of Grace:

*Word of Knowledge*  
*Word of Wisdom*  
*Discerning of Spirits*

"If any lack wisdom let him ask." "We have not because we ask not."  
Study the word. God has provided a vast amount of revelation in the bible. Real revelation will not contradict the Bible. Watch out for the counterfeit.

Power Effects of Grace:

*Faith*  
*Miracles*  
*Gifts of Healing*

These always follow the revelation effects of grace. We have received the *charis* of God. (Christ in you) As we live and serve the grace of God to one another the effects of grace will be impossible to hide. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Mark 16:20

Free equal powerful, The treasure: Christ in you, The hope of Glory. It is not about our earthen vessels. It's about Christ in us living his live through us.



## The Return of Christ

The audio version of Neil Tolman teaching this subject can be downloaded or listened to at: [http://www.neilshouse.com/files/return\\_thes.mp3](http://www.neilshouse.com/files/return_thes.mp3)

Paul writes this letter to a group of believers that are only a few months into their new life as Christians. The second letter to the Thessalonians was written about 6 months after the first letter.

In the first letter Paul reiterates what he had taught while he was there. Paul's time in the town of Thessalonica was brief: only a few weeks. Paul had told them about the promised return of Christ but two major questions had come up:

1. Some had died and now there were questions about what would happen to those who die before Christ returns.
2. There was a false rumor moving through the church that Christ had already returned and they had been left behind.

The combination of the information provided in these two letters gives a good basic summary of the return of Christ. We would do well to understand this basic and direct teaching of Paul concerning the return of Christ. Using this as a foundation, those who are so inclined can delve into Daniel, Revelations and the many other scriptures that illuminate the future events in a figurative way.

Paul's letters to Thessalonica are unique, because they contain very little reference to the Old Testament. Contrast that with the book of Romans which was written years later to a group with many converted Hebrews. The book of Romans has extensive references to the old Hebrew writings.

For modern Christians with a limited understanding of the Old Testament and Hebrew idioms, the two little books of Thessalonians are a straight forward and easy to understand place to begin. The Thessalonian letters and the letter to the Galatians are the earliest New Testament books written by Paul. These three books give the most basic and easiest to understand description of the gospel as revealed to Paul.

Once we are fully versed in Galatians and Thessalonians, Paul's later writings from prison to the churches at Colossae, Ephesus and Philippi give a fuller revelation of the gospel as it relates to us in this time period. After that a study of the book of Romans rounds out the understanding of how the gospel of the mystery is related

to the old covenant with Abraham and later the laws of Moses. This is the approach that will help recovering performance based religion addicts understand the rest and peace that we have been called into. Religion addiction, like all other addictions, is based upon false assumptions and expectations. We should not be surprised when the word of God proves our assumptions wrong. When that happens, rejoice! And be glad! Praise Him for His truth. Rest in His mercy and grace.

Lack of understanding of the mystery gospel of Paul leads to performance based religion. When our relationship with God starts anywhere but Christ in us, we miss the whole point of Christianity and end in the bondage of religion. We are not a religious people. We are a Christ people. Christianity is not a religion. Religion is about WHAT you do to become acceptable to God. Christianity is about WHO we are in Christ because of what God has done. Once the WHO question is decisively answered, the “what we do” question is just a supernatural result of Christ in us, which is who we are.

Look with me at the verses in First Thessalonians that describe the coming of Christ for his saints: We will start in Chapter 4 verse 13.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, (dead) that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

I can think of no subject that has had more sensationalism and hype applied than the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead. There seems to be an endless number of theories plus all of the Hollywood images that mix eastern and pagan philosophies into an everything goes tradition. This tradition has been melded into the traditional Christian religion of our day. All of these sources are to be rejected in the face of the simple and direct writings of Paul. Paul says he does not want us to be ignorant. Then he proceeds to lay out the simplicity of what will happen. The verses speak for themselves:

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, (dead) that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep (are dead) in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, (revelation) that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep. (dead)

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5

1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, (they: third person, those outside the body: (unbelievers.) Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Ye: You plural, brethren: the believers. We are not in the dark, we have Christ in us the hope of glory. Evidently there is something that we should be looking for to warn us of the time.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Listen closely to what Paul is telling us here. This flies in the face of the religious idea that we are hapless, helpless sinners waiting to be judged by a vengeful God. Religion would tell you that you just don't know for sure until the judgment day whether or not you measure up. What a bunch of hoo haw! We have Christ in us! God has made us to sit in the heavenlies IN Christ at the right hand of God. There is no question that we are children of light and not left in the dark. If you have been born of God's seed, and have Christ in you, God is talking to you. You are not left in the dark. Wake up! Listen, watch! Remember Romans 8:1? "There is therefore now no condemnation to those of us that are in Christ Jesus ...

5 Ye are all the children of light, Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

(Do you remember 1Jn 1:5 “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” If God is light, and we are born of God’s seed then we are the children of light.)

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Now, lets go to the second letter to the Thessalonians Chapter two, verse one.

After hearing the first letter from Paul, two major questions concerning Christ’s return overwhelmed the church in Thessalonica. Some misunderstood and stopped working because they thought Christ would return at any moment. They were living off others and not contributing to the community of believers. There were still others that believed the false rumor that Christ had already returned and they were left behind.

Paul clarifies the expected return of Christ and gives important insight into the appearing of the “man of sin” and the “falling away” that will precede Christ’s return, which is our sign that the time is near. Read with me:

2Th 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2Th 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christis at hand. (is already come)

NIV 2 not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come.

2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: [for that day shall not come,] except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

2Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

2Th 2:5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

2Th 2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. (what withholdeth? Paul just told us: the man of sin.)

Now you know! Paul just told you why you can be sure that Christ has not already come because the man of sin has not been revealed yet but he will be revealed in his time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, (letteth = holds back) until he be taken out of the way. (Come into being out of the midst.)

King James “taken out” is the Greek 1096 ginomai

- 1) to become, i.e. to come into existence, begin to be, receive being
- 2) to become, i.e. to come to pass, happen
- 2a) of events
- 3) to arise, appear in history, come upon the stage
- 3a) of men appearing in public
- 4) to be made, finished
- 4a) of miracles, to be performed, wrought
- 5) to become, be made

KJV “of “ 1537 ek {ek} or ex {ex} out of, from, by, away from

KJV “the way is 3319 mesos {mes'-os}; from 3326; adj1)

- 1) Middle; 2) the midst; 3) in the midst of; 4) amongst

Green's Interlinear: 7 For the mystery of lawlessness Already is working, only He is restraining now, until He comes out of the midst.

The King James, mystery of iniquity: The secret of sin or the sinful secret, was already at work in the first century. The devil has a plan and he is working his plan to pull the church away from the truth. What is the truth? The simple gospel of the mystery: Christ in you; you in Christ at the right hand of God; the body of Christ; each individual an equal member; fully sharing in the calling and ministry of Christ.

The devil has made significant progress. When will the man of sin, the son of perdition come into being in the midst of us? Only God knows. But Paul tells us here that it will be our sign of the times. We will know and we have not been left in the dark. We won't have to guess if it's him. We will know it.

2Th 2:8 And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

2Th 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

2Th 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; (why?) because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

2Th 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

2Th 2:12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

2Th 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

2Th 2:14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(We have obtained the glory! It's Christ in you the hope of glory!)

2Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions (Paul's gospel) which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

2Th 2:16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, (Not works but grace)

2Th 2:17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

2Th 1:12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So there it is; the word of God, written by revelation by Paul, the master builder. Paul, the one who received the revelation of the mystery: The body of Christ, Christ in you the hope of glory, a new race, a new man, all things new, where there is neither male nor female, Jew or gentile, but we are all one in Christ.

This is the revelation of God concerning the return of Christ. Straight forward: Simple. This is who we are. This is what will happen. This is what we are to look for. Watch and be ready. We can make it more complicated if we want to but ..... Why join in with the children of the night?

Paul comforts and encourages us to not be deceived or discouraged. He exhorts them (and us) to stick with the gospel they received from him. They would be soon visited by the Judizers from Jerusalem. We too, have been indoctrinated by the descendants of the Judizers. Many in Thessalonica, along with most in the other early churches were deceived and bewitched into going back under the laws of Moses and into bondage. Only a remnant, throughout the past two centuries, have lived free, manifesting and walking in Christ.

We must watch and wait,  
We must sink into the breastplate:  
The breastplate of faith and love,  
Living in the hope of Christ in us,  
Which is our helmet of salvation.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has set us free and be not ensnared again in the yoke of bondage.