

EPHESIANS

3. THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL PAUL'S PRAYER PART 2 EPHESIANS 1:3-10

When it comes to a book like Ephesians, our brains and rational leanings almost do us a disservice. We are in a world of deep theological truths, but can get distracted by certain words and phrases (e.g., election, predestination, etc.).

- ♦ **What things easily distract you in life?**
- ♦ **What things distract you in the early parts of the book of Ephesians?**

John Calvin wrote, *“The very time (meaning timing) of election shows it to be free; for what could we have deserved, or in what did our merit consist, before the world was made?”* When we have difficult days or good days, God is at work and has never once abandoned us.

A humble view of election shows us that there is no room for pride, only humility and thanksgiving.

- ♦ **Have you had any more questions about election since last week?**

In Ephesians 1:9, Paul will talk about the “mystery” of God’s will. In Christianity a “mystery” is something that was once unclear and now is clear because of God’s work in Christ. The mystery of Christ is that: Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. This is considered a “revealed mystery” because it was what the Old Testament had been saying all along and we now see the reality in Jesus.

Read Ephesians 1:3-10.

- ♦ **What things did you once question about God that now you can now answer?**

DISCUSSION NOTES

- ♦ **Are there any current “mysteries” that you wonder about?**
- ♦ **How is the Gospel the fulfillment of all mysteries?**
- ♦ **What about God’s character allows you to rest in Him when we have questions/doubts?**

When Latin began to take over the world, many people forgot what the word mystery meant so translators borrowed a word from the Roman army: *“sacramentum.”* The sacramentum had two parts:

1. The soldier took an oath of office.
2. The Army branded him behind the ear with the number of his legion.

The “sacramentum” brought about new advantages. Ancient Latin theologians used the word *sacramentum* because they thought it was the best Latin equivalent for when we trust in Jesus; it is spiritual and physical (we get new responsibilities, a new spiritual status before God, and we are marked by God’s Spirit).

- ♦ **How are we marked by God’s Spirit?**
- ♦ **What does it mean to be found in Him?**

The purpose of God revealing this mystery of how salvation comes is that we would:

1. Understand redemption and salvation is centered in His mercy.
2. Be sanctified.
3. Understand adoption.
4. Praise Him for His mercy and grace.

God saving us, the way He does, gives us great reason to rejoice. We have been saved, we are being sanctified, we have been adopted, and this all results in praise. It all comes because we understand the revealed mystery of the Gospel. One writer says “He has begraced us!”

- ♦ **What does it mean that God has begraced us?**
- ♦ **What does it mean to be sanctified?**
- ♦ **How do you praise Him for His mercy and grace?**