

CALL to PRAYER - Pray for an increased appetite of God's word. (Job 23:12 / Shredderman)

## **Ephesians 3:1-10 - A Good News Mystery**

Intro - I don't know how many of you enjoy a good mystery – Masterpiece Mystery (PBS) ... mystery novel...etc. A good mystery has things to figure out – twists in the plot, unexpected events & imbedded clues. Some mysteries are a “*who done it?*” about a murder. A good mystery is written or played out for an audience (the reader or watcher). Our text today mentions not just a good mystery but a *Good-News Mystery*. There are hidden clues in this mystery planted in redemptive history & scripture story. The plot seemed to be going in one direction then it took a surprising twist. *The Gospel Mystery* is a murder mystery; not so much a *who done it* but a “*what did it do?*” What did the murder of the Son of God do...what did it accomplish? This *Mystery* is also played out before an audience; a surprising audience because it is an angelic audience. The gospel is *Mystery Theatre* played out before the heavenly hosts (both good & bad - a great cloud of witnesses) This mystery also has a prominent narrator - the Apostle Paul. Today we consider: *A Written Mystery. The Person of Mystery. The Union in Mystery The Audience Observing the Mystery.*

### **A REVEALED & WRITTEN MYSTERY**

1. The “*Mystery*” is not man-made. Paul didn't come up with this mystery novel.
  - a. Eph. 3:2-3 Paul was a steward of the revelation and the mystery 1 Cor. 4:1
  - b. Gal. 1:11-12 a revealed mystery
2. The “*Mystery*” is selectively revealed.
  - a. Col. 1:26
  - b. Matt. 13:11 Luke 8:10
3. The “*Good News Mystery*” is a written mystery.
  - a. Eph. 3:3 “...as I wrote before in brief.” Two possible meanings:
    - i. Paul wrote a previous letter to this church.
    - ii. Paul is referring to Eph. 1&2 which mention the “mystery.”
      1. Election, adoption, redemption, 1:9, sealing, grace, unity...
  - b. Rom. 16:25-26
    - i. The secret mystery has been revealed and manifested by the Scriptures.
    - ii. The Bible is a mystery novel. A written mystery Divinely revealed.

### **THE PERSON OF MYSTERY**

- The main character in the *Good News Mystery* is Jesus Christ
  - Eph. 3:4
  - Col. 2:2-3
  - Col. 4:3
  - Jesus is the Good News. He is the Gospel and the gospel is a mystery - Eph. 6:19
- There is a mystery about Jesus Christ. There is no one like Jesus...unique in history...He stands out
  - 1 Tim. 3:16
  - Fully God & fully man. God in the flesh. Creator/Redeemer/Substitute/Savior

- The New Testament explains the Old Testament
  - Eph. 3:5
  - Jesus is all through the OT - John 5:39      John 5:46-47
  - Jesus is there in: type/shadow/mystery
    - Clues scattered throughout the OT but unveiled in the NT.
  - The Person of Mystery is unveiled in Scripture's written history
    - He who is the Word is found in the Word...Word becoming flesh - what a mystery!

### **THE UNION IN MYSTERY**

- ❖ The *Good News Mystery* is about The Person who brings union among persons.
  - Ephesians 3:6
  - A gospel mystery is Jew & Gentile united in one body...the church. (Eph. 2:11-19)
    - Gal. 3:26-29
- ❖ The Jews have a special place in the story
  - Most of the story centers around these special people (OT)
  - The plot thickens and it has a big twist in the NT. Acts 11:18
    - Not just the Jews...but the world - John 3:16      1 John 2:2
- ❖ The OT gave clues to this upcoming plot twist
  - Abraham father to many nations...all nations blest...light to the gentiles...
    - Jonah      Is. 19:24-25      Hosea 2:23b
  - God's plan to include the Gentiles was mostly a mystery to the OT saint
- ❖ God has only one people (no identity politics in the church)
  - The Jews got first dibs - Rom. 1:16
    - To the Jew first but not to the Jew only
  - In the unfolding of the mystery - OT mostly Jews....NT mostly Gentile
    - Rom. 11:25-26
  - Full number of Jews and gentiles make one complete body...the church
    - Let not man separate what God has joined together.
      - Popular teaching to separate/divide Jew and Gentile saints
- ❖ There is also a mysterious *Mystical Union* with Christ and His one church
  - Eph. 5:31-32      Col. 1:27
    - The marital union is a parable of the *Mystical Union*...a gospel union
  - What a mystery is the "Gospel Mystery!"

### **THE AUDIENCE OBSERVING THE MYSTERY**

- This mysterious drama of redemption & union is played out before an audience.
  - Eph. 3:9-10
  - The "Good News Mystery" is a cosmic drama being played out before an audience of angles
  - 1 Peter 1:10-12      Angels are enthralled with gospel unity/mystery - Rev. 5:9-10
- If the angelic world is intrigued with the unfolding drama and mystery that God has written....
  - ...shouldn't we be intrigued as well? (Does Shredderman or The God-Man have your attention?)