

# Paul's Seven Mysteries

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[0:00] I am His Father, but I am not a father in that same sense of the word as some people try to make it out to be.

! Hey, listen, I'm glad to be here. I'm glad I was able to bring my lovely wife with me as well. I want to let you know something. Today's a special day for us. 51 years.

Today, March 30th, 51 years ago, we said, I do. And she said, I do too. And bless God for that, huh? Isn't God good?

And listen, you can go through ups and downs and everything else just because you say, I've been married 67 years or whatever the case is. Or I have been married five years or whatever. God's good.

Or unfortunately, and I don't mean to rub salt in anybody's wound. If you've gone through problems in a marriage and all that, still God's good. You can have health problems. Still God's good.

[1:06] You can have financial problems. Guess what? Still God is good. In fact, you know what we did? We liked that so much that God is good. We named our son God is good. Michael, Tobiah. That's his middle name.

And Tobiah means God is good. God is good. All right. I want you to take your Bibles and turn to the book of Acts. The book of Acts. I want to talk to you this morning for a little bit.

Well, I'm going to take up the whole Sunday school hour. So I say a little bit, but you know what I mean. I'll take as much as I can and hopefully not more. But I want to talk to you this about something.

I want to answer a question today. And this is just it's a lesson. It's a teaching lesson. It's part of a lesson that I taught in my Sunday school class a couple of years ago.

And so I'm just giving you a little bit of that, an insight into one aspect of it. I think something that God showed me that is nothing new to me by any stretch of the imagination.

[2:06] But you have to ask yourself when you read the Bible and you go through things, you have to ask yourself, why Paul? Why Paul? And why do we emphasize Paul's epistles and Pauline doctrine?

We came across when we were overseas in Poland. By the way, if I'm new to some of you, my wife and I, we've been in the ministry since 1978.

God called us to where I was an assistant pastor for about 20 years in Pennsylvania, where my son was also an assistant pastor and the area that his wife grew up in, in southeast Pennsylvania.

And then after that, God called us to the country of Poland. We were missionaries overseas for just under 20 years as well. But the, and I'm losing my train of thought here.

Oh, okay. Pardon? Yes. When we were in Poland, the fact that people, there was a couple of different people that we came across, that they'd look at Paul and they'd say, no, they want to get rid of Paul.

[3:10] And it was just the words of Jesus. And forget about the apostle Paul. And the problem with that is you can go, you can, you know, you say, well, the words of Jesus should be the most important because he was God manifest in the flesh.

And so there's a point there by all means. But you have to understand if I'm looking at a timeline here in front of me, when Jesus was speaking, there was no crucifixion, no resurrection at that point was there.

So some of the things that he was talking about had to do with a kingdom that was going to be coming, et cetera. And not the church age. And we live in the church age today.

And guess what? The apostle Paul is going to be the apostle to the Gentiles in the church age. And that's why we need to focus our attention on him. Doesn't mean we throw out the rest of the Bible. No way. But if you're going to if you want something that applies to us today, you're going to read Pauline epistles. But if you want spiritual truth that applies to anything and everything, you can read your whole Bible.

[4:13] Don't pick and choose. I mean, it's OK. Oh, I like to read this and I like to read that. But best thing you could do, start in Genesis, read through Revelation. And then when you finish, start in Genesis and read through Revelation.

And when you and keep going and going and going. And if you want to do another special study, then, yeah, zero in here or zero in there. And you'll be the better for it. But you know what we should do before we get started?

Let's have a word of prayer. Our Father, I want to thank you for your goodness to us and your mercy. I want to thank you for this opportunity to open up your word this morning. I pray, Father, that what's said and done, you'll show us and reveal truth to our hearts.

In Jesus' name, amen. So I'm in the book of Acts chapter 9. I don't know if I told you the chapter, chapter 9. I want to look at verse 6. This is, of course, when Paul, or rather Saul, was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians.

And on his way there, of course, he sees the bright shining light in the sky. He falls off his horse. He's on the ground looking up. And he said, who art thou, Lord?

[5:19] And he said, then the voice from that light, that bright light said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It's hard for you to kick against the pricks. I'm pricking at you and you're kicking back at me.

And then Paul says this, look at verse 6. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Now, he knew who this voice was speaking to him because he identified himself, right?

Jesus. I'm Jesus. So now all of a sudden, Paul realizes the one he'd been persecuting these followers of this Jesus, this ringleader of a sect of the Jews.

And now he's confronted by him and he recognizes this is deity. And this is holiness. And this is pure righteousness and Lord. And I believe that's the moment Paul got saved.

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And that's what Paul did here. Then look down and look down with me a little bit at verse 15.

[6:19] But the Lord said unto him. Now, Ananias was directed by the Lord to go to Paul or to Saul rather again. You always want to say Paul because that's what we know him as now.

But he went back to Saul and the Lord says this in regarding this Saul that he had just spoken to and called. But the Lord said unto him, go thy way, for he, Saul, is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

So God had a special ministry for this man who is going to become an apostle of the Lord, one sent forth of the Lord. And you have to ask the question, why?

Why Saul? Why did he choose Saul to be an apostle to the Gentiles? Didn't he already? Didn't Jesus Christ already at the end of the three gospels, at least, send out the disciples?

Mark chapter 16, verse 15. Go ye into all the world, all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. And then go ye therefore and teach the nations, baptizing them, etc. in the book of Matthew 28.

[7:32] So Jesus had already spoken to the 11, those minus Judas. He'd spoken to them and he was giving in them a commission to reach the world for him, right?

Right. But then nine chapters later in the book of Acts, all of a sudden he says, no, you know what? I'm going to choose this fellow right here.

I'm going to reveal myself to him and we'll see what happens because I'm going to have this fellow be an apostle to the Gentiles. But why did he choose Paul?

Why did he choose him? And why didn't he work? Why did he just say to Peter off the side? By the way, Pete, I've got this for you. Why didn't he do that?

And I think if you think about this and you dwell upon it, I think it has to do with their backgrounds and the experiences. Those 11 apostles slash disciples, they'd spent three and a half years with the Lord.

[8:41] My wife and I went to Bible school for three and a half years, as it turns out. But we didn't spend 24-7 with Dr. Ruckman or any other individual.

But they spent 24-7 with the Lord. Can you imagine that? 24-7 with the Lord every day, any day, all the time.

And John, at the end of the Gospel of John, John said, hey, listen, you know, I wrote these things here that you would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and then believing you might have life through his name.

But he said, if I were to write everything that he did or he said there's not enough books in the world that would contain it. Now, again, keep in mind, that's kind of a relative statement.

There weren't as many books then compared to, say, the Library of Congress today, that type of thing, and the other books. You know, anybody can write a book nowadays. But all John was saying is, even Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we have just a glimpse of the life of Christ.

[9:44] We don't have everything there. But think about what those fellows went through. When John the Baptist came on the scene and when Jesus, of course, came on the scene, he was preaching unto them, according to the book of Matthew, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

Mark and Luke say the kingdom of God was at hand, a spiritual kingdom. But Jesus also said that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. A literal, physical kingdom is there waiting to be established here on earth.

And then when he spoke to the apostles later on in the book of Matthew around chapter 10, he told them this. He said, go ye into the, go ye, go not into the way of the Gentiles.

Go not into the way, but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. So those fellows, when they were growing up in their ministry and their mindset and their ministry methods were already formed with all the time they spent with the Lord.

This is what's awaiting you, the kingdom of heaven, the long promised kingdom from ages past throughout the Old Testament. This is what you should do.

[10:59] Don't go to the Gentiles, but go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. That's who I'm trying to reach. So Paul, Saul, gets saved.

He didn't have that same mindset. He didn't have a lifetime or even three and a half years invested in the earthly ministry of the Lord. He didn't have this mindset of the anticipated kingdom sitting under the ministry of the Lord.

He would have had it from Judaism, but not for the time invested with the Lord. He didn't have those past experiences. Go back, by the way, go back to chapter one of the book of Acts.

Chapter one, something very interesting. And we're looking at the mindset of these other apostles and why God didn't choose them, but instead chose Saul slash Paul.

When Jesus was there for 40 days, notice in the end of verse three, chapter one, verse three, it'd be seen of them 40 days speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

[12:09] So Jesus spends 40 days after the resurrection and they get an advanced study course. I mean, they have three and a half years, but now there's a transfer.

There's a changeover. Now they're going to be leaving the law and they're going to be entering into grace. And other things that are going to develop as we're going to, obviously you see when you read through the book of Acts.

But Jesus spoke to them about things that he said to Nicodemus, except you be born again, you'll not see the kingdom of God. But I don't believe this.

Jesus wasn't revealing to them things about the church. But what he did, he revealed things about salvation, imputed righteousness, justification, reconciliation, redemption.

He revealed to them things that would pertain after the resurrection. You know, when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus and said you had to be born again, that's not anything Nicodemus could do at that moment.

[13:20] Jesus said, you know, you have to be born again, see the kingdom of God. But that's not anything that Nicodemus could act upon. Well, you say, well, why is that? Well, because the new birth demands the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Christ.

It demands the gospel. You have to believe the gospel to get saved and be born again. That hadn't happened. So Jesus was showing Nicodemus the future, what was going to happen afterwards. Jesus now is explaining to them salvation compared to the Old Testament law and the rituals and the rites and the sacrifices and the holy days and everything else that pertained to the Old Testament law.

Jesus said, hey, there's something new, something different that's coming up. It's like what he said to them on John chapter 13 through 16, when he's talking, even chapter 17, for that matter, the prayer.

But he's talking to them in the upper room discourse. And he's giving those disciples New Testament doctrine. Something that was new.

[14:27] Why? Well, that was the evening before his crucifixion. So it was the last opportunity they had before the crucifixion to give them a glimpse of what was going to await them on the other side of the crucifixion and resurrection.

Now he explains more about it. But notice something in this context. What are their minds still hung up on?

Look with me at verse five. Acts one, verse five. For John was truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

So he's talking about events that are going to take place at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit is going to come down upon them. And when I believe they were baptized into Christ. But look at verse six, their response.

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, look at this. Will thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? Well, their mindset went back to the things they heard when Jesus began his ministry.

[15:33] When John the Baptist had begun his ministry. Lord, remember back when John came on the scene, talked about the kingdom of heaven. Remember when you came on the scene and you started preaching about the kingdom of heaven.

And you started preaching the gospel of the kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. And we envision that kingdom being established and peace on earth and Jerusalem be the center of the world and all that.

Said, is this now the time? Their minds were still on a Jewish time clock. They weren't thinking about.

Getting out and building churches that wasn't in their mindset whatsoever. In fact, go to chapter two, go over to chapter. They weren't thinking the Lord had already told them to go into all the world, preach the gospel of every creature.

He'd already told them that. But that's not where their mind was. And I believe, again, as we see, this is part of the reason why God pulled Paul out.

[16:36] And he called Paul to be that ministry minister to the Gentiles. We know in the book of Acts that God's transfer. He's going to change things from the law to the grace, from the nation of Israel to the church.

OK, but before this takes place, we know the Jews are given a second chance to receive Jesus as their Messiah in Acts chapter two. That's not the peace sign.

That's Acts chapter two. Acts chapter two. So in Acts chapter two, Peter is preaching to them. Now, he's preaching to the nation of Israel, his brethren.

And look with me at the end of his message. Look with me at verse 36. Verse 36.

Therefore, Peter's concluding. Therefore, let all the house of Israel. That's his audience. The house of Israel. I'm not preaching to the house of Israel today. Now, I know we have some heritage that's Jewish, but this is not the house of Israel in front of me today at all.

[17:45] But this is what he's saying to them, because that's his audience in Jerusalem. Know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, this man, Jesus, whom ye have crucified.

God made him Lord and Christ. You saw him as a man. And you rejected him as a man. You considered him. You considered what he said to be blasphemy.

That he was taking credit for things that only God could take credit for, being able to forgive sins. You considered the fact that that the miracles that he did, he did because of Beelzebub through the power of the devil.

You thought that he was breaking the Sabbath when he did different things, etc. And you crucified this man, this one that you saw as a man only, this Jesus. You crucified him.

But through the death, burial, and resurrection of this man, Jesus, God's declared that he's the Lord. He's not just a man.

[18:48] And he's the Christ. He's the what? That's a, you know, Christos and that's going to Greek. But coming back to the Hebrew, that's going to be the Messiah. That's going to be the anointed one.

Messiah and Christ are the same thing. And they both mean the anointed one. And this is, you know, Psalm chapter, verse, Psalm 2, right in there.

He's against the Lord and his anointed. Jesus is the anointed one. That's, he's preaching to the Jews about their Jewish Messiah.

Messiah. He's not preaching to the Gentiles about a Savior. Now look back for a little bit. Here's the context in the book of, in Acts, in Peter's preaching.

Look, just start with me in verse 16. We won't read through, but just to get the context. In verse 16 in chapter 2, it says, And this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. So he's going to reference back to the book of Joel chapter 2.

[19:47] And he's basically quoting Joel chapter 2, several verses at the end of the chapter. And in it, he's talking about the fact that God's going to pour his spirit out upon their sons and daughters, which they're seeing by the fact that the Holy Spirit has come upon those apostles.

And they're speaking in unknown tongues. Then look what he says in verse 19. And I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, the moon into blood. Well, that, if you ever read the book of Revelation, you know that's what you're looking at there. Tribulation period passage.

And then what does he say at the end of verse 20? Before that great and notable day of the Lord come. That day of the Lord, a phrase used throughout the Old Testament in reference to that period of time that was going to come, which we know from what Jesus said in Matthew 24 in particular, going to be the great tribulation period.

That future period of time after we're caught up. And God's that seven year period of time, I believe. But whatever that time, that period of time when the Antichrist will be revealed, etc.

[21:04] And then at the end of which, Jesus Christ will come upon this earth and do battle with the Antichrist, the nation of this world, and then will lick them and then finally establish the kingdom of heaven on earth.

And that's what he's preaching about, right? Exactly. That's exactly what he's preaching about. God gave them. We'll look at it, but God gave them a second chance. The nation didn't receive Jesus as their Messiah at the end of chapter 2.

Those 3,000 Jews got saved. I would be a pretty good deal. I mean, if you had a revival here and you had 3,000 people get saved, even in this huge area as far as people, that'd make a little bit of a dent.

That'd be quite a... You'd have to... I guess you'd have to break the walls down here, wouldn't you? You'd have to get a different church. Maybe that one that we saw on the highway, 14 or whatever. But that wasn't the nation.

And that wasn't the leadership of the nation. So God also, in chapter 7, when Stephen preached to them, God was giving them another opportunity as a nation to repent and to turn and to believe that Jesus is their Messiah and receive him.

[22:16] And had that happened, had that happened, everything would have been altogether different than it was, than it's turned out to be. Had they as a nation, whether in chapter 2 or chapter 7, if the leadership of that nation would have gone forward and repented, etc., as I mentioned, then God would have set in motion the events that would have led right into the tribulation period.

The Antichrist would have been revealed. At that point, there was somebody there, no doubt that would have been the Antichrist. He would have been that. From the book of Daniel, you have so much material on it.

He would have been that little horn or that one of fierce countenance that Daniel talks about. And then one day, the Son of Man would come in the clouds, come down, and he would establish his reign and dominion over the whole earth.

That would have taken place. Those events would have unfolded. The problem was, in fact, I'll say this, if that would have taken place, there would not have been any church age.

There wouldn't have been any church. You say, well, come on, brother, what are you talking about? Well, go back to the Old Testament. Where do you see the promises of the church age, etc.?

[23:37] I think you have types that are there because God knows the beginning from the end. He knows what he knew ahead of time, what was going to happen. But he didn't lay it out that this had to happen, that there had to be a church age.

You say, well, there's loads of verses about the Gentiles in the Old Testament, you know, receiving light, etc. Yes, and that would have happened in the Millennial Kingdom. That's when it would have happened. Listen, God gave the Jews that opportunity in Acts chapter 2 and Acts chapter 7 because Jesus coming to this earth, even though he came and offered the kingdom, he knew ahead of time they weren't going to receive it.

It wasn't going to happen. He knew that he would have to be rejected because it was already written ahead of time. Minimally, Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, even Daniel chapter 9 says the Messiah will be cut off, but not for himself.

So the Messiah was going to come. The Messiah would be rejected and crucified. He would die.

That had to happen.

But now we're in Acts chapter 2. That's already happened. So therefore, God's offering them the gift of the opportunity to receive Jesus as their Messiah.

[24:59] Acts 7, receive him as your Messiah, but they don't do it. And what happens? God begins to close the door of faith to the Gentiles. And he begins to open the door of faith.

I'm sorry. He closes the door of faith to the Jews and he opens the door of faith to the Gentiles. In fact, when you look at the end of Acts chapter 14, after Paul returns to Antioch from his first missionary journey, he states how God opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

He uses that phrase. So what does God do? After chapter 7, God begins to change and he begins to move away from the Jew.

Who's the first person that gets saved in Acts chapter 8? Well, you have actually, you have Philip going up to the Samaritans and people there getting saved. They weren't full Jew, half-breed. And then you have the Ethiopian eunuch, a proselyte to Judaism, but a Gentile that gets saved by Philip or through Philip in Acts chapter 8.

[26:03] Then chapter 9, the next chapter, you have what we read at the beginning of the lesson today. You have the apostle Paul who becomes the apostle to the Gentiles, gets saved. And then in chapter 10, the next chapter, you have Cornelius.

You might say the first genuine Gentile, not a proselyte whatsoever, first genuine Gentile that gets saved. And the gospel is going to go out to the ends of the world.

And from then on, even as Paul begins to preach, and in Acts chapter 13, Paul goes to the Jews first. He goes to the synagogue where Jews are accumulated there and assembled.

And he goes and preaches to them. And then when they reject, he goes out to the Gentiles. And he said, God's going to close the book on you, and he's going to open it up to the Gentiles. And that's what we see unfold in the book of Acts.

Somebody had said this, I think it was Ken Blue, used to pastor up in above Seattle, Washington. And he said in his book, I believe on the book of Hebrews, actually that I read his commentary, a small commentary that it has.

[27:11] He said he looks at the book of Acts, not so much as the God building the church, but as God closing the door for the Jews, which is what you see as you go through the book of Acts.

God closes the door to the church, and he's moving on from the church, of course, to the Gentiles. So the question arises.

Paul gets saved. You have this mindset that the Jewish apostles still have of a kingdom, and their mentality is to reach the Jews.

In fact, it's all the way, you get to the Acts chapter 11, and even though they're going out and preaching, the Bible says they were preaching only to the Jews.

That's interesting. All the way in Acts chapter 11, they were going out, but their preaching was simply to the Jews at that point. So who's Paul going to go to? Paul gets saved.

[28:10] Go to the book of Galatians, please. The book of Galatians. Paul gets saved.

Where's he going to go to get some information, to learn things? You might think to yourself, you might say, well, he'd go down to Jerusalem to talk to the apostles.

But that's not what he did, and that's not what God directed him to do. When Paul got saved, what did God direct him to do? Look with me. Well, look at chapter 1.

Look at verse 17. He says this, Neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned unto Damascus.

Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him 15 days. So after Paul gets saved, he doesn't go fellowship with the other apostles, and he doesn't go talk to them and say, Hey, listen, I mean, I just met the Lord on the road, but you guys spent three and a half years with him.

[29:19] Tell me, what was it like, etc.? He didn't do that. What happened? Well, look with me. Go slide up, back up to verse 11. Chapter 1, verse 11 of Galatians.

Paul says this, But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached to me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. God revealed to Paul truths that Paul would have no idea about whatsoever, had no access to whatsoever.

You say, well, yeah, but the gospel, the apostles knew about the gospel. Yes, they were eyewitnesses of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

There's obviously no doubt about that whatsoever. But go back with me to 2 Corinthians, just a couple pages, 2 Corinthians chapter 12. Just a page or two, go back to 2 Corinthians chapter 12.

[30:24] Look what else Paul says here. Paul says, It is not expedient for me, doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

And we don't have the time to look at it, but you could develop this and you could find throughout the book of Acts different times where the Lord revealed himself to Paul. Even in, again, in Galatians chapter 2, he talked about revelation.

In Ephesians chapter 3, he says, By revelation, he made known unto me the mystery. God had a unique relationship, or I should put it this way, Paul had a unique relationship with the Lord that the others probably didn't have to the same degree.

Jesus Christ taught Paul personally, individually, and gave him revelation. Now, don't expect that today. Your revelation is going to come this way.

This way. It's not going to come necessarily. I'm not saying, you know, I'm not trying to put God in a box by any stretch of the imagination. God can do anything he chooses to do by all means.

[31:35] But God's going to speak to you now through his word. But God spoke to Paul directly through revelation. How was that? Visions, he says. Visions and revelations.

Revelations. Jesus Christ taught Paul the gospel. New Testament salvation. And Jesus Christ also revealed to Paul other aspects of things in ministry.

Things that others didn't have access to that Jesus Christ gave to Paul. In fact, go over to 2 Peter. For a second. Go over to 2 Peter. 2 Peter chapter 3.

Jesus is going to reveal things to Paul that he did not reveal to the other apostles slash disciples. And you'd have to scratch yourself wondering, well, when they started hearing this, how did they react to it? Well, look what Peter says here. We're at the end of chapter 3. Look at verse 15. Peter's finishing a thought and says, And account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation.

[32:54] Even as our beloved brother Paul, also according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you. So, Peter is acknowledging Paul.

He's acknowledging him as a brother. He's a beloved brother. And he's got wisdom. And he's written some things. And of course, we know that Paul wrote all the different, 13 different epistles. But then he says in verse 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 rest, as they do also the other scriptures unto their own destruction.

So, Peter says, Hey, Paul's a brother. He's a saved man. He wrote some things. And some of the things he wrote, he said, I'll be honest with you, I had to scratch my head and wonder, where did he get that from?

I mean, come on, think about it. He spent, they spent three and a half years with the Lord. And now all of a sudden, this fellow out of the, just out of the blue, gets saved and then starts teaching and preaching things that they never heard from the three and a half years they spent with the Lord and the 40 days after.

[34:09] Where'd they get that from? But look what he equates it with. Peter equates Paul's writing with what? Scripture. Scripture.

He said, They're hard to be understood, which they that are unloaded and unrest, as they do also the other, the other scriptures. He said, Hey, people take apart the other scriptures, they take it apart to their own destruction, and they do the same thing with Paul.

These couple of people that my wife and I met in Poland that diminished the writings of the apostle Paul were like Peter, but they were like who Peter was talking about.

Peter that were saying, Oh, no, no. You need the law. You need what Moses wrote. Or people that were saying, Oh, no, no. You need what Jesus said. Not minimizing either one of them.

But we're in the church age. Post-crucifixion. Burial, resurrection of Christ. And you know what we need as a church?

[35:16] We need what God gave Paul. You say, It's just Paul. I'm not exalting Paul above anything else. It's what the Holy Spirit gave Paul. It's what Jesus Christ gave Paul for us.

Now, I want you to, we're going to have to skip a couple of things here, but I want you to look with me over to Romans chapter 11. So what did he give? Now, I believe he gave him Romans chapter 11.

I believe God gave Paul the revelation of seven different mysteries. Now, the word mystery is found 27 times in the Bible.

27 times. You've got it mentioned in Matthew, Mark, and Luke because of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven or the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

you haven't mentioned in the book of Revelation, mystery, Babylon, religion, et cetera, that type of thing. So you haven't mentioned those places. The other apostles that wrote James, Peter, John, Jude, all those books, you know how many times they mention it of those 27?

[36:28] Zero. They never mentioned the word mystery. Paul mentions the word mystery, mysteries, 20 times. 20 times. And by the way, let me back up a second here if I can find the exact, I want to find the exact numbers in my, here.

The word church. The Lord revealed that there would be a church to the apostles because he said, you know, regard it, thou art Peter and upon this rock, I believe he pointed to himself.

Upon this rock, I'll build my church. Gates of hell shall not prevail against it. So he mentioned, he revealed to them the fact there's going to be a church. But you know how many times they wrote about the church?

From James through Jude, they mentioned it five times. Church. Paul, in his epistles, mentions it 47 times.

So who do you think had a greater emphasis on the church? Paul or these other writers? Obviously, the apostle Paul. So what did God give to Paul that he didn't give to the others?

[37:39] Romans chapter 11. Look at verse 25. Here's a mystery. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery. Well, a mystery is one of two things.

A mystery is something that can't be understood. It just defies logic, such as the Trinity. Trinity. The Trinity is a mystery.

No matter how much you read your Bible, it's still a mystery. How do you explain the fact that there's three in one? The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, they're co-equal, co-eternal, but they're distinct.

That's a mystery. The other side of a mystery, of course, is something that was previously not revealed. Therefore, it's a mystery. This is something that was a mystery. It be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits that what?

That blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in. So, the very first mystery that God revealed to Paul, not necessarily in time, but sequentially as we read our Bible, we see these seven different mysteries unveiled to us.

[38:57] and revealed to us. I believe there's a reason for the sequence, but it's not necessarily in time because Romans wasn't the first epistle that Paul wrote, but this is the first one in his epistles, and in that first one, I believe what he's showing, the mystery that God has revealed through Paul to the Gentiles is how the church began.

the church began because Israel rejected their Messiah, and God closed the door of faith to Israel. He opened it up to the Gentiles.

He talks about an olive tree, etc., branches broken off, other ones put in their place, talking about Gentiles. We got in on it, and we get in on salvation today because the Jews as a nation rejected Christ, and that's the first one that he brings up to him.

Go over with me to 1 Corinthians. Slide over to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. 1 Corinthians chapter 15. Look with me at verse 51. If you don't mind, I won't wait till you get there.

He says this, Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trump shall sound, the dead shall be raised, incorruptible.

[40:18] We shall be changed, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, this mortal must put on immortality, and he reveals to them the mystery of the rapture. So in the first mystery that he reveals sequentially as you read through his epistles, he's telling the Gentiles, this is how you got started as a church.

God put the Jews, they put them on the block off to the side, because as a nation they rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and now the gospel's gone on to you, but the next one he reveals to them is the closing chapter, the rapture.

The church begins, and now the church ends, and we're taken up to glory. He tells the bookends to those in the whole church age, right there. What's the third one?

Go over to the book of Ephesians. The third and fourth are very similar. people talk about the seven mysteries, they want to put the book of Revelation chapter 17 in there about the Babylon, mystery of Babylon, etc.

But I'm talking about the apostle Paul in the seven. I'm taking the body of Christ here that's revealed. I want to go to chapter 5 first. Ephesians chapter 5, you could take it either which way, either verse.

[41:37] We're going to go to chapter 5 and then chapter 3 as well. Chapter 5 verse 30. Paul says this, For we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, shall be joined unto his wife, they too shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery. It's a mystery that God revealed, something God revealed to Paul by revelation, something that wasn't previously known.

But I speak concerning Christ and the church. Then if you flip back to chapter 3, a similar part of the mystery, but I think there's something distinguishing both of them.

Ephesians chapter 3, look at verse 3. Paul says this, How that by revelation he made known to me the mystery, as I wrote a few words, whereby when you read, you may understand my knowledge of the mystery of Christ, which in ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit.

What is the mystery? That the Gentiles should be followers and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel. Paul says there is a body of Christ.

[42:52] If we were to look at chapter 3 as the next one in sequence and Paul says, hey, there's the body of Christ and Jews and Gentiles are in that body.

And Jews and Gentiles are in that body and there's no difference. The Jew who used to have a valued position before God, more so than the Gentile dogs, don't have an elevated position. The Gentiles who had a reduced position don't have that. They're co-equal. They're identical. They're in Christ. Makes no difference whether it's a man or a woman, whether it's a servant or a master, whether it's rich or poor or a Gentile or a Jew.

Makes no difference. We're all one in Christ, right? That's a mystery that was revealed to Paul. Peter didn't get that mystery. Like I said before, quoting, reading chapter 3 of the book of Peter, he's scratching his head and goes, well, I never saw that.

I never heard about that before. Now, you might hear somebody speak and preach and go, oh, that's new, that's different. I never heard that. Just a different angle, but it was always there. But what Paul got wasn't always there.

[44:08] He's writing the book of Ephesians and he said, hey, it wasn't written down before time. It wasn't revealed ahead of time, but God's revealed it now. There's a church. And not only are we Jews and Gentiles together in Christ, he said, but now in chapter 5, Christ is in us too.

We're in him and he's in us. Back in chapter 5, this is a great mystery, Christ and the church. There's a oneness. Jesus referred to this back in the upper room discourse.

One more we'll look at and that's Colossians and we're going to close. Colossians chapter 1. This is the fifth one. And again, in sequence, reading through, you come up to this one.

Verse 26 of Colossians 1. Even the mystery, which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints.

What is that mystery, Paul? To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is what? Christ in you. The hope of glory.

[45:23] Do you have eternal security today? You know why you have it? Because Christ is in you. That's your hope of glory. You're not going to Las Vegas and having a hope that cha-ching and everything else.

That's not your hope. But your hope is something that's a definite expectation. It's a certain expectation. You have the hope, the promise of glory one day because Jesus is in you.

The next one has to do with the mystery. mystery of iniquity. And then he concludes in 1 Timothy with the mystery of godliness.

God was manifest in the flesh. These mysteries, Jesus revealed to Paul. Because he revealed them to Paul and he told Paul and explained to him the mystery of the church.

God used Paul for that reason. The reason why he didn't use Peter or Andrew or James or John or Bartholomew or the rest of them. Why should we read Paul? Why should we read Pauline epistles?

[46:27] Not over and above the others, but when we want to know doctrine for the church, that's where we go. When we know to know truth for the church, that's where we go.

When we want to know how churches should be established and set up with pastors slash bishops and deacons, that's where we go. Pauline epistle. Pauline and why did we go to Paul?

Because God, Jesus Christ chose him out because the other fellas had something else on their mind all the time. Obviously, they moved on from that, but at the beginning, they definitely had the blinders on their eyes and they could only see things a certain way.

Alrighty, we're going to stop there. I hope you got something out of it and hope something that you could use and benefit from. Our Father, I want to thank you for your goodness to us and your mercy. I want to ask, Father, that you bless what was said today and may you bless the service to follow.

In Jesus' name, Amen.