

The Gospel Mystery

“That all may be one.” ... John 17:21

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Dedication

Dedication

To Kathryn, God's precious gift, my true wife,
one in Christ and Christ in us together,
sharing this Mystery as one.

Preface

Test what our little book says.

Trust *nothing* we say.

Ask if what's presented is of God or not.¹

Look up each citation in your Bible.

See what your Bible says.

The Gospel Mystery unlocks the deep things of God.²

The Gospel Mystery *is* Love past understanding³

The Gospel Mystery replaces religiosity, challenges “churchianity”, destroys divisive doctrinal differences, tears down strongholds of men’s traditions, pulls pride from its pulpit, and sets souls free from fear by securing certain assurance of God’s Protection, God’s Presence, and God’s Perfect Plan.

But, as your Bible says plainly, the Mystery has been hidden!⁴

We hope our little book will help you see.

¹ 1st John 4:1

² 1st Corinthians 2:10

³ Philippians 4:7

⁴ Colossians 1:26

Preface

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold Grace of God.”

1st Peter 4:10

“If the Lord builds not the house, they labor in vain who build it.”

Psalms 127:1

“Where is boasting, then? It is excluded.”

Romans 3:27

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels, so the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

2nd Corinthians 4:7

The Gospel Mystery

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Introduction

Your Bible speaks of what Apostle Paul calls “the Mystery of the Gospel”.⁵

Perhaps you never heard it preached nor saw it in your Bible.

It’s been hidden, as it was in Paul’s day, “hidden from the ages”.⁶

Paul says God called him to preach “the unsearchable riches of Christ” so *everyone* could know the “fellowship of the Mystery”.⁷

“Christ in you, the hope of Glory.”⁸

God in Christ and Christ in us.⁹

The Plan of God hidden from the ages.

God in Christ and Christ in us, so we may *be* that fellowship of Faith for which The Lamb of God gave His Life at Calvary’s Cross.

He gave His Life so you could hear this certain trumpet and be saved.¹⁰

He gave His Life to tear down walls of denominational division.

He gave His Life so we could come together as One!¹¹

He gave His Life for The Gospel Mystery.

Mystery that unlocks your Bible.

Mystery that unlocks *you!*

⁵ Colossians 1:21-29

⁶ 1st Corinthians 2:7

⁷ Ephesians 3:9

⁸ Colossians 1:27; Romans 5:2

⁹ John 17:21-23

¹⁰ 1st Corinthians 14:8

¹¹ John 17:21-23

Introduction

The Untold Story of Job

Job was *not* patient.

The story in your Bible has *nothing* to do with “patience”.

All your life you’ve been told about “the patience of Job”.

Job’s story is actually about the Mystery ... not patience.

The Book of Job is said to be the oldest book in your Bible.

Old or not, it is perhaps the *least* understood.

Here’s the *true* story.

.....

Job lived around 1520 BC.

He had a wife; seven sons; and three daughters.

He owned 7,000 sheep; 3,000 camels; 500 oxen; 500 donkeys.

A large staff of servants cared for his household, lands, and livestock.¹²

He was faithful in worship, honest in business.¹³

But, Job was *not* patient.

Your Bible says he was a “perfect” man. However, he was not “perfect” as we use that word today. That word “perfect” in the ancient Hebrew meant merely that he was “complete, balanced”. As G. Campbell Morgan puts it in The Answers of Jesus to Job,¹⁴ he was “an all-round man”, honest, trustworthy, law-abiding.

Far from “perfect”, as we use that word today.

Very far from “perfect”.

And, *certainly* not “patient”!

¹² Job 1:2-3

¹³ Job 1:1

¹⁴ Baker Pub Group (1973)

The Untold Story of Job

.....

One day satan said to God, "Job praises you because he is rich. Let me take his riches. Then he will curse you to your face."¹⁵

God gave satan permission to take Job's riches.

Sounds odd, but God had a purpose.

God's purpose was to reveal the Mystery *within* Job.

.....

Job's livestock were stolen or killed.¹⁶

His children died¹⁷.

Still Job did not blame God.¹⁸

.....

Then satan said, "Let me take his health. Then he will curse you."¹⁹

Again, intending that Job would discover the Mystery and be blessed at last, God gave satan permission to take Job's health, but not his life.²⁰

So, Job was infected with festering boils from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. He sat down in ashes and scraped his oozing sores with a broken piece of pottery.²¹

Preachers, pastors, priests, parents, and pretty much everyone who claims to know the story of Job will tell you he remained "patient" after this.

Hogwash!

¹⁵ Job 1:11

¹⁶ Job 1:13-17

¹⁷ Job 1:13-19

¹⁸ Job 1:22

¹⁹ Job 2:5

²⁰ Job 2:6

²¹ Job 2:7

The Gospel Mystery

They don't know Job.

They didn't read their Bible.

Or, they don't know how to read.

Job was *not* patient, and his story is *not* about patience.

.....

Job was a man and, like most of us, he was “full of himself”.

He had no room for the Mystery.

God wanted Job to see *inside* himself.

But, Job was too busy judging others, proclaiming himself wise, pretending to be a great teacher of truth, blinded by the same pride that poisons us all.

Job refused to see the reality of “self” hiding in the cocoon of conceit we all use to conceal what we don't wish others to see and, therefore, refuse to see ourselves.

God is preparing to remove Job's cocoon.

Job hid his “self” like little children “hide” beneath blankets, thinking no one can see.

We all hide the shortcomings of our “self”.²²

We remain unaware of the Mystery that may wait until we've so destroyed ourselves that there is nothing left of “self” to hide.

Then the rooster crows, so God's work *within* us can begin.

God is going to shatter Job's shell of pride.

Wisdom cannot grow in those who think themselves already wise.

Truth will not invade where pride has locked the door.

²² Romans 3:23

The Untold Story of Job

Job suffered as billions suffer today, people close to you, people you meet on the street, people terrified by the truth they dare not see *within* themselves.

Job's suffering strikes all of us, according to God's Loving Purpose.

God is going to save Job from drowning in the depth of self-deceit.

We all are drowning, dancing with death, dodging our darkness.

Until God saves us by the Mystery that saved Job, we sink hopeless in the lake of lies we tell ourselves, fearing our child's blanket will disappear and all the world discover what the world already sees.²³

We are so full of self we seldom hear what friends and loved ones say to comfort and advise us. We hear only what we wish to hear, shutting out the rest. Dialog becomes debate. We are driven by a determined desire to teach things that we barely understand ourselves. We want to rule the roost, and like the henhouse husband strutting his stuff about the barnyard with feathers fluffed and beak held high, we also struggle to appear more than we are.

Pride works like that.

So it was with Job.

.....

His best friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar came to comfort Job as he sat in his ashes, scraping his sores.²⁴

They barely recognized him, so fallen from riches, so filthy in rags.²⁵

²³ 1st Corinthians 4:5; Matthew 10:26; Luke 12:2

²⁴ Job 2:8

²⁵ Job 2:12

The Gospel Mystery

They sat with him seven days and seven nights without speaking a word.²⁶

They were best friends. Who else would sit silently so long with festering pride perched on a pile of ashes picking at sores?

.....

Eliphaz²⁷ spoke first.

He said he'd seen a vision that made his hair stand on end, a spirit who asked, "Shall a man be more pure than his maker?"²⁸

Ouch!

He said God was "correcting" Job and that it was for Job's own good.²⁹

Zing! Zap!

Job dodged the beneficial bullet, shooting back, "A true friend would have pity."³⁰

.....

Bildad³¹ echoed what Eliphaz tried.

Job dodged again, insisting God "knows I am not wicked."³²

.....

Then Zohar³³ challenged Job.

²⁶ Job 2:13

²⁷ The name means "the effort of God".

²⁸ Job 4:17

²⁹ Job 5:17

³⁰ Job 6:14

³¹ The name means "old friendship".

³² Job 10:7

³³ The name means "to leap up".

The Untold Story of Job

Zohar said Job would speak differently if God "would open His lips against thee."³⁴

Job dodged this time with sarcasm, saying, "Surely wisdom will die with you, Zophar."³⁵

.....

Job rebuked all three.

He insisted they said nothing new, that what they said was known to everyone, that none of their professed wisdom was anything special, that he already knew all they said.

He defended his "self".

"I will maintain my *own* ways before Him,"³⁶ he proudly proclaimed.

He believed he was righteous, and it was all his own doing.

.....

Eliphaz asked, "Who born of woman is righteous?"³⁷

Job called him a "miserable comforter",³⁸ claiming if their circumstances were reversed, Job would soothe them with his words and comfort them in their grief.³⁹

Job wanted to be praised.

Don't we all?

He grumbled that his suffering was "not for any injustice in my hands".⁴⁰

Yet, he told his friends, "I cannot find one wise man among you."⁴¹

³⁴ Job 11:15

³⁵ Job 12:2

³⁶ Job 13:15

³⁷ Job 15:14

³⁸ Job 16:2

³⁹ Job 16:4-5

⁴⁰ Job 16:17

⁴¹ Job 17:10

The Gospel Mystery

He threatened them to have pity on him. "Be afraid of the sword," he warned, "for wrath brings punishment by the sword, so you may know there is a Judgment."⁴²

He didn't see wrath seething in the darkness of his "self" deep within!

Job skated on thin ice.

The men dished it back and forth, blind to the blunders on both sides.

Job accused them of concocting lies to support their arguments.⁴³

Where is patience in this?

.....

Eliphaz said Job did not "give water to the weary", that he withheld "bread from the hungry", that he sent "widows away empty".⁴⁴

So, Job changed the subject. No surprise there!

Job said, if he but knew where to find God, he would argue his case so well that God would be bound to repent, restore his health, and replace all he lost!⁴⁵

.....

Bildad asked, "Can a man be justified with God?"⁴⁶

Job insisted, "My foot hath held his steps. His way have I kept."⁴⁷

.....

⁴² Job 19:29

⁴³ Job 13:4

⁴⁴ Job 22:7,9

⁴⁵ Job 23:3

⁴⁶ Job 25:4

⁴⁷ Job 23:11

The Untold Story of Job

Job did not “understand” (a word that literally means to “stand under”, to be *submitted* to truth, not to stand over it).

He envied his friends' wisdom, hid from his own self-doubt, and pompously pronounced his greater understanding of God's ways.

He wanted to be *their* teacher, telling *them* things they already knew.

So, he rattled on, "He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at His reproof. He divides the sea with His power."⁴⁸

His friends knew all that.

But, Job yearned to rule over them, that which God hates.⁴⁹

He said, "My righteousness I hold fast."

It was *his* righteousness he held as he droned on, "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me. My judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind. I was feet to the lame. I was father to the poor."⁵⁰

How long would *you* sit with a man who said such prideful things about himself?

So Job's friends gave up.

They saw there was no point in trying, because Job was “righteous in his own eyes.”⁵¹

.....

Then spoke Elihu,⁵² a younger but wiser man.

Elihu knew the Mystery.

⁴⁸ Job 26:11

⁴⁹ Revelation 2:6, 2:15

⁵⁰ Job 29:14-16

⁵¹ Job 32:1

⁵² The name means “My God is He.”

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Elihu confessed, "I ascribe righteousness to my Maker."⁵³

"God is greater than any man,"⁵⁴ Elihu added.

"He will not lay on a man more than what's right."⁵⁵

"Job speaks without knowledge. His words are without wisdom."⁵⁶

Elihu said God "seals the hand of every man, so all may know His Work."⁵⁷

Elihu saw Job's blindness.

Job saw himself righteous by the value of "self".

Job could not see.

....

Then God spoke.

The Word that is no book.

The Still Small Voice that's *in* the earthquake, *in* the whirlwind, *in* the thunder.⁵⁸

Job *heard* the Word *within*.

"Stand up like a man and answer *Me!*"⁵⁹ the Word commanded.

"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?"⁶⁰

"Tell me where light dwells?"⁶¹

⁵³ Job 36:3

⁵⁴ Job 33:12

⁵⁵ Job 34:23

⁵⁶ Job 34:35

⁵⁷ Job 37:7

⁵⁸ 1st Kings 19:12

⁵⁹ Job 38:3; 40:7

⁶⁰ Job 38:4-6

⁶¹ Job 38:19

The Untold Story of Job

“Who makes rain fall where no man is?”⁶²

“Who makes tender buds spring forth?”⁶³

“Who provides food for ravens, colors peacock wings, feathers ostriches, and gives strength to horses?”⁶⁴

“Who puts wisdom in the inward parts and gives understanding to the heart?”⁶⁵

“Did *you* teach hawks to fly?”⁶⁶

“Can *you* command eagles to soar?”⁶⁷

“Whatsoever is under the whole of heaven is mine.”⁶⁸

“Shall he who argues with the Almighty also instruct Him?”⁶⁹

“Will you condemn me so *you* may be righteous?”⁷⁰

....

The Mystery revealed to Job at last!

God’s Light let Job see the darkness of “self” *within*.

God’s Word let Job hear the echo of his empty words.

God’s Still Small Voice revealed what Job had refused to see, what he’d been hiding from others and from himself, the truth of the empty “self” *within*.

Job finally confessed, “I’ve said things too wonderful for me, things I did not know.”⁷¹

⁶² Job 38:26

⁶³ Job 38:27

⁶⁴ Job 38:37-41

⁶⁵ Job 38:36

⁶⁶ Job 39:26

⁶⁷ Job 39:27

⁶⁸ Job 41:11

⁶⁹ Job 40:2

⁷⁰ Job 40:8

⁷¹ Job 42:3

The Gospel Mystery

All he blasted at his friends was only what he learned from others.

Now Truth spoke *within* him.

Job's saw his mortality, the beyond that none can escape, the need for God to be our wisdom, strength, and beauty, the hope that God will carry us across the threshold of death to a new reality where hiding is no more.

Job *saw* the Word.

The Light revealed Job's "self", hiding in the darkness *within* the man who was, after all, just a man for all that.

By *hearing* the Word (who is God and not a book) Job's vanity died.

He had no more to say.

No longer any room for boasting.⁷²

Ego erased.

Pride's blinders busted.

.....

Job no longer wished to be the man he was. He hated the man he'd been. Your Bible says he "abhorred" himself.

Dr. Morgan's [The Answers of Jesus to Job](#) explains Job's word "abhor" in ancient Hebrew meant to disappear.

Job felt like crawling under a rug.

He gave up imagining his "self" could be righteous.

His pride took a hike.

He resigned himself to being just another human like us all, a mere mortal being.

Our "greatness" interferes with God's purpose.

Job nearly lost his life to learn this Truth.

⁷² Romans 3:27

The Untold Story of Job

Dr. J. Sidlow Baxter in his Explore The Book⁷³ says Job came to "the end of his self-ism", that the impossibility of answering the Still Small Voice of the Word *within* him brought realization that the Miracle of God's Amazing Grace, by which alone we are sustained, is all we ever have in truth, whether we admit it to our "self" or not.

What pride perceives as goodness in ourselves is really the goodness of God alive *within* us, working *through* us.

God's Eternal Plan.

We can hide from this, as Job did, bringing sorrow to ourselves and untold suffering to those we claim to love.

We may lose everything, even our lives, if that's what it takes to learn the Truth that sets us free.

If this seems hard to believe, read the story for yourself.

Or, reject its truth, and insist like Job that you are capable of being "good" all by your "self".

Your Bible says, "There is none good, no not one."⁷⁴

We are sheep in His pasture.

He is The Good Shepherd.

We are nothing but clay.

God is the Potter.

.....

So, your Bible says, "The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before."⁷⁵

"After this lived Job another 140 years and saw his sons and his sons' sons, four generations."⁷⁶

⁷³ Zondervan (1986)

⁷⁴ Matthew 19:17; Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19

⁷⁵ Job 42:10

⁷⁶ Job 42:16-17

The Gospel Mystery

Saved through Faith by hearing the Word *within*.⁷⁷

Saved by Grace not of himself, but by the Merciful Gift of God,⁷⁸ exceeding great good fortune.

Job's story is about repentance ... not patience.

True repentance cannot begin until God shows us the ugly truth that lurks in each and every one of us, until healthy shame makes us wish to be made new.⁷⁹

Faith comes by hearing the Word *within*.⁸⁰

Are you listening?

The Mystery.

⁷⁷ John 3:16

⁷⁸ Ephesians 2:8

⁷⁹ 2nd Corinthians 7:9-11

⁸⁰ Romans 10:17

The Question

Do you hear the Word *within*?

No question is more important.

Is God speaking *within* you as He spoke to Job, or, is He still “outside” you, somewhere “above” you, or *beside* you?

Is God your “co-pilot”, riding through life in the shotgun seat *beside* you?

Does the Word caution, counsel, guide, and encourage you from *within*?⁸¹

Is God *within* you?

This is the *most important* question you will ever ask.

Is Christ *within* you?

“Christ *in* you, the hope of glory”!⁸²

Seven words.

Some people ask, “Who are *you* in Christ?”

We Philadelphians⁸³ ask, “Who is Christ in *you*?”

Paul says the Mystery of the Gospel is Christ *in* you, the hope of Glory⁸⁴.

Jesus says, “The Kingdom of God is *within* you.”⁸⁵

Is God *within* you?

Have you found God *within* Christ and Christ *within* you?

Do you wish to know Him *within* you?

⁸¹ The very word “encouraged” means to have courage within, just as the word “enthusiasm” means to have God within. Words and their meanings are critical to understanding God.

⁸² Colossians 1:27

⁸³ Revelation 3:7-13

⁸⁴ Colossians 1:27

⁸⁵ Luke 17:21

The Gospel Mystery

Do you long for His presence *within* you?

Do you desire His nature *within* you?

Do you wish for His love *within* you?

Are you ready for His judgment *within* you?

Seek and you shall find.⁸⁶

Ask and the Mystery will be revealed to you.

⁸⁶ Deuteronomy 4:29; Proverbs 8:17; Luke 11:9-10

The Word

“In the beginning was the Word.”

John writes in the first sentence of his story of the Life of Christ, “... *and the Word was God.*”⁸⁷

The Word was in the beginning.

The Word was God.

In original Greek by which John wrote, the term he used was “*Logos*”, not our English “Word”.

To the Greeks of his day, the word *Logos* was well known and commonly used, much as native American Indians use the term “Great Spirit”, as George Washington used the term “Providence”, and as men like Benjamin Franklin used the term “Grand Architect of the Universe.”

The *Logos* to long ago Greeks is the “logic” that controls the universe, the “mind” behind it all, the “life force” that persists in living, the “plan” by which all things are made and guided, the pervading “reality” that can be hidden from but never escaped, the “is” that ever was and evermore shall be.

A four-letter Hebrew word is much like *Logos* but unspeakable. The Hebrew word is sometimes called the Tetragrammaton, representing the unknowable beyond time, the all that is and the power by which all is sustained, the Ultimate Truth men call God.

יהוה

The four letters are displayed today as shown, but in ancient times the letters had various other shapes, though the combination always meant the same.

Read backwards (as Hebrew is) an approximate English pronunciation is: “Yod Heh Vah He”.

⁸⁷ John 1:1

The Gospel Mystery

This is the Word most English Bibles translate “Jehovah”.

At best this pronunciation is guesswork. The sound was lost when mankind’s world-wide language was confounded by God at the mighty fall of Babel’s Tower. (From which we get our word “babble”, to speak without knowledge.)

The simple form of that first letter (י) “Yod”, (read backwards) is contained within the form of every other letter as you see. Some scholars say it represents an open hand, perhaps signifying a gift. Others say it is the source of light, the seed of life.

The second letter (ה) “Heh” may mean “behold”, “witness”, “see”, or “reveal”.

The third letter (ו) “Vah” is believed by many to mean “and” or “yet more”.

The fourth letter (read backward) is the same as the second, so the four-letter Name may mean, “The gift of light and life revealed and yet further to be revealed”.

Some say it simply means “I Am”.

The verb is not present tense alone, however, but at the same time also past, present, and future all wrapped in One Name: “I Am, I Was, I Shall Always Be”.

The Greeks avoided the mystic confusion that entertains those captured in the occult cobwebs of esoteric investigations into the meaning of the Tetragrammaton, so John wrote simply “*Logos*”, a concept well known and understood by Greek thinkers of his age.

“In the beginning was the *Logos*, the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God.”⁸⁸

To the Greeks in John’s day, the *Logos* grew towering oak trees from tiny acorns and vast flowering bushes from miniscule mustard seeds. The *Logos* made wind, rain, snow, and sunshine. The *Logos* was forever and never was

⁸⁸ John 1:1-14

The Word

not. The *Logos* was everywhere at once and nowhere in particular. The *Logos* put scales on fish, feathers on birds, and fur on beasts of burden. The *Logos* pecked baby ducklings free from their eggs, belched fire from trembling mountain tops, and sang sweetly to mankind with the music of colorful songbirds.

The *Logos* to Greeks in John's day was all that is, all that ever was, all that ever shall be, including the unseen power that creates, sustains, and destroys according to His Will, in His Time, in His Way.

The *Logos* and Word in your English Bible are one and the same.

The *Logos* is not a book.

The Word is not a book.

God is not a book.

John says the *Logos* was “made flesh and dwelt among us”⁸⁹ Clearly not a “book”.

The *Logos* came alive *within* Jesus, an innocent baby born in a barn, laid to sleep on a pillow of straw in an old cattle feeding trough, hunted by Herod's soldiers, worshipped by wise men and shepherds alike, and murdered by priests so you could discover the Truth of Grace⁹⁰ and ask *Logos* to dwell *within* you.

Word in man.

God's Design.

The Master Plan.

Logos formed the stars and determines the destinies of men and nations according to this Master Plan, the Mystery.

God is *Logos*, and *Logos* is God.

⁸⁹ John 1:14

⁹⁰ John 1:17

The Gospel Mystery

God is the Word, and the Word is God.

Your Bible is a book *about* the Word.

Be not blind like Job, knowing only what you learn from others, pretending to know more than you do.

The Word created you, keeps you alive, feeds you, forgives you, loves you.

The Word is Mercy, Love, and Truth Himself.

The Word is Life that never ends.

The Word is more than all the printed thoughts that could ever be bound between the covers of a billion books or stored in countless clouds of computer memories.

The Word is the Beginning who has no End.

And, as we hope you will learn from our little book, the Word seeks to live *within* you, to guide you by His Still Small Voice, to lead you safely on the narrow path to Life Eternal.

The Word may be speaking to you at this very moment.

Can you stop thinking long enough to listen?

Can you hear His Still Small Voice *within*?

Can you hear Him say, "I Am"?

The Mystery.

What Your Bible Says

Though the world go mad in spiritual conceit and deadly determination to put God safely away in the box of its vain imaginings,⁹¹ the reality of God forever remains unchanged.

Though the Gospel be “adjusted” by the demands of different denominations, removing this from the Bible, ignoring that in the Bible, telling the timid that only one interpretation is correct, yet the Truth remains unaltered.

Though the Mystery be hidden from millions, yet the Mystery is real and revealed to all who are being saved.⁹²

Steeple soars above society’s pulpits where men strive to be “fathers of the faith” (like Job) yet Jesus says we have only One Father, warning us to call no man “father”, but to put our trust in God alone.⁹³

We men are only men for all that, to paraphrase the witty Scottish poet Robert Burns, who writes, “Man’s rank is but the guinea’s stamp,” and, “though thousands worship at his word, he’s but a goof for all that, while the man of independent mind looks on and laughs at all that.”

See Truth for yourself.

Find Truth *within* when the Word speaks to your heart.

Find Truth *today*, for tomorrow may be a day too late!⁹⁴

When God begins to speak *within*, you’ll *know* that what our little book proclaims is true.

⁹¹ 2nd Corinthians 10:5

⁹² Colossians 1:26

⁹³ Matthew 23:9

⁹⁴ 2nd Corinthians 6:2

The Gospel Mystery

You'll *know* the Mystery that's been hidden from the ages,
God's Wisdom revealed *within*, the Prize more valuable
than rubies.⁹⁵

Wisdom looks beyond conflicting doctrines.

Wisdom accepts no opinions for Truth.

Read your Bible and see that what our little book says *is*
true, the Mystery hidden far too long from you already.

The Mystery will fill you with a new kind of joy.⁹⁶

Outworn ways will fall away.⁹⁷

Life will be completely new.⁹⁸

You will *know* you are saved.

Done with doubt forever.

Safe at last.

Search the scriptures.⁹⁹ See what your Bible says about the
Mystery. You'll find it in both New and Old Testaments,
written about by men inspired by *Logos*, wiser than any of
us today.

Peace past understanding.¹⁰⁰

Righteousness flowing *through* you from the Fountain of
God's Amazing Grace.

Life without end!

See for yourself why Jesus repeatedly spoke to "those with
ears to hear".¹⁰¹

Ask God to give you ears to hear Him speak *within* you.

⁹⁵ Job 28:18; Proverbs 3:15, 8:11

⁹⁶ Acts 3:9

⁹⁷ 2nd Corinthians 5:17

⁹⁸ 2nd Corinthians 5:17

⁹⁹ John 5:39

¹⁰⁰ Philippians 4:7

¹⁰¹ Matthew 11:15, 13:9, 13:43; Mark 4:9, 4:23, 7:6; Luke 8:8, 14:35

What Your Bible Says

Only Truth is true.

Nothing else is.

The Mystery makes us hungry and thirsty for True Righteousness,¹⁰² weary of working at our make-believe goodness,¹⁰³ willing to be changed from *within*.

By the incredible great good fortune of God's Grace, the Mystery opens our eyes to see that only God is good, only His Power at work *within* us can produce any lasting fruit of any real value from our lives, that all "our righteousness" is only filthy rags.¹⁰⁴

Your Bible says God desires "mercy, not sacrifice"¹⁰⁵. He doesn't want *our* righteousness. He wants to *be* Righteousness, alive and working *within* us to do His Will.

We can plead for the New Life Jesus promises, or we can stay stuck in our old life, hoping for last-minute mercy when we come to our inevitable demise.

Better to be born again today by the Power of God *within* than live *without* in the poisonous power of pride and, at that time appointed for us all, to be cast into outer darkness where we will weep and gnash our teeth with no hope of parole or reprieve.¹⁰⁶

That's what your Bible says.

Paul asks, "Who can deliver me from the body of this death?"¹⁰⁷

Only Christ *within* you.¹⁰⁸

God wants us to enjoy Him.

¹⁰² Psalms 143:6; Matthew 5:6

¹⁰³ 2nd Corinthians 2:9

¹⁰⁴ Isaiah 64:6

¹⁰⁵ Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13, 12:7

¹⁰⁶ Matthew 8:12

¹⁰⁷ Romans 7:24; 2 Timothy 4:18

¹⁰⁸ Romans 8:2-4

The Gospel Mystery

God wishes you to be filled with His love, His peace, and His forgiveness pouring into His world through *your* heart by His Spirit alive *within*.¹⁰⁹

Godliness by Truth and Power *within* you.

Genuine Love flowing through you by the inworking presence of Christ *within*.¹¹⁰

No longer need you strain to live a “godly life”. God will live His Life *through* you as the “deep things of God”¹¹¹ are revealed *within* you by the Mystery.

God created you to be His holy habitation, where He finds pleasure as the Victory of Christ is demonstrated to the world by your increasing, genuine, exciting joy!¹¹²

The fruit of your God-filled life pours into a needy world as God glorifies Himself through you.

The Mystery.

¹⁰⁹ John 10:10

¹¹⁰ 2nd Timothy 3:5

¹¹¹ 1st Corinthians 2:10

¹¹² Philippians 2:13

The Work

“It is God who works in you both to will and to do his good pleasure.”¹¹³

That’s what your Bible says.

God’s work pleases God.

Ponder this.

God at work *within* you, changing your will, adjusting your “want to”, replacing old desires with new motives, new goals, new values.

Doing “good” is no longer a sacrifice.

God wants to work *within* you to make you desire to do the things that please Him. It is no longer any sacrifice.

As you begin doing what pleases God, because you *want* to, new blessings pour into your life as never before!

Desire determines destiny.

The Mystery changes what you want, and that changes what you become and what you receive in return!

This is the hidden Truth that will someday stop war, prevent poverty, cure disease, and usher in the thousand-year reign of Christ on Earth *within* us all.

God’s Plan reaches far beyond what we imagine!

God changes us so He may draw the world to Himself, as a shepherd draws his sheep, not by force nor by the rod, but calling them gently so they come not out of fear of punishment but willingly.

This is God’s Plan for Peace on Earth.

God wants to erase our ego and protect us from our pride, but first we must allow His Work to begin. We must be willing to be changed.

¹¹³ Philippians 2:13

The Gospel Mystery

As we are changed, the world is changed.

Doing good is never again a sacrifice, because it is no longer we who do it but God living *through* us.¹¹⁴ We only do what we wish to do, what we desire, because our “want to” is being changed from *within*.

This *is* what your Bible teaches.

Let those “who have ears to hear” discover the Word *within* them and be changed.

Let all the world give God permission to have His Way.

Do you have “faith”? Ask God to change you. This is the true measure of “faith”.

Ask God to clothe your soul in *His* Righteousness.¹¹⁵

Then you will know Liberty.¹¹⁶

Ask God to work *within* you *His* way, not your way.¹¹⁷

Our pride seeks to rule us and will destroy us if we let it.

The “self” inside you may be saying our little book is nonsense, that the “good” in you is *your* doing. Pride works like that, seeking glory that belongs to God alone. Beware of pride. It *always* brings destruction!¹¹⁸

Pride says we please God by doing things we don’t want to do and not doing things we enjoy, but the truth is that all of us do what we want, regardless.

Pride sees only “self” on the throne.

Pride is deaf to the Mystery.

Pride is blind to the Truth.

Pride is a prison.

¹¹⁴ Ephesians 1:11; Hebrews 13:21

¹¹⁵ Galatians 3:27; 2 Corinthians 5:4

¹¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 3:17

¹¹⁷ Philippians 2:13

¹¹⁸ Proverbs 16:18

The Work

To set you free, God must *change* you completely.

You must be “born again”.¹¹⁹

His life.

His desire.

His work *within* you.

His work *through* you.¹²⁰

When what you want changes, what you do changes.

That’s why Paul writes, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.”¹²¹

There’s no longer any condemnation.¹²²

It’s no longer you but the Spirit of God living *in* you.¹²³

Paul tells the Romans, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”¹²⁴ He doesn’t say, “Transform yourself.” He says, “Be transformed.”

He urges the Philippians, “Let this mind be in you that was in Jesus.”¹²⁵ He doesn’t say, “Put this mind in you.” He says, “Let this mind be in you.”

He shouts with exceeding joy, “Christ lives *within* me!”¹²⁶

The Mystery!

¹¹⁹ John 3:3; 1st Peter 1:23

¹²⁰ Philippians 2:13

¹²¹ 2nd Corinthians 3:17

¹²² Romans 8:1

¹²³ Galatians 2:20

¹²⁴ Romans 12:2

¹²⁵ Philippians 2:5

¹²⁶ Galatians 2:20

Justification

God's work in us who truly "believe" is twofold.

We ask.

He gives.

Our asking comes first.

We ask Him to put *within* us His desire to do things that please Him

We ask Him to put *within* us His dislike for things that displease Him.

But, before the Mystery can be revealed *within* us, we must see things about "self" that we don't want to see. We must see how "self" seeks credit for talent, praise for effort, sympathy for sacrifice, and recognition for wisdom, strength, and beauty!

Foolishly we try to justify "self" in the eyes of God and the world around us, family, friends, associates, society at large.

We want to be justified by *our* works.

Yet, your Bible says we cannot be justified this way.¹²⁷

Our justification comes by the Mystery at work *within* us, the Gift of Faith that comes by hearing the Word *within* us, Faith that is by Christ's Spirit *within* us.

It is not *our* faith that saves us¹²⁸. Your Bible is clear on this point. It is *His* Faith imputed to us by the Spirit of Christ *within* us.

We no longer seek what pride desires. Instead, we give God thanks and praise for what little "good" others see in us, confessing it is His doing, not ours.

¹²⁷ Galatians 2:16, 3:11; James 2:24

¹²⁸ Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:12; Philippians 3:9; Colossians 2:12

Justification

Faith that saves is “not of ourselves”.¹²⁹

Faith that saves is the Faith of Him who dwells *within*.

His Faith saves us from our pride.

His Faith lifts us from the darkness of our doubts.¹³⁰

His Faith shames us to repent and pray to be changed.¹³¹

His Faith displaces doubtful disputations over doctrines.

His Faith promises to unite us as God’s True Church.¹³²

His Faith prepares us for the Millennial Age of Grace.

Imagine a world free from fear and hate, free from war and every kind of violence, free from religious differences and the stupid hatred such differences breed.

Imagine God working *within* all of us, to will and do His Good Pleasure.¹³³

Imagine no room for pride nor foolish boasting.¹³⁴

God knows we cannot make ourselves “good”. That’s why Jesus asked, “Who among you can make yourself taller by taking thought?”¹³⁵ He didn’t speak of physical height. He illustrated by a parable the foolishness of thinking we have *any* power other than what God allows.

Make yourself taller by any effort of your own? It can’t be done.

Make yourself “good” like Job so God will be your debtor? Impossible!

Make yourself righteous? Not in a million years!

¹²⁹ Ephesians 2:8

¹³⁰ Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30

¹³¹ 2 Corinthians 7:10

¹³² John 17:23

¹³³ Philippians 2:13

¹³⁴ Romans 3:27

¹³⁵ Matthew 6:27; Luke 12:25

The Gospel Mystery

The struggle to “be good” strikes a fatal blow to hope.

It can’t be done!

God is no tyrannical taskmaster demanding duty beyond the reach of our human frailty.

There is none good. No. Not one. Your Bible says so.¹³⁶

Lying spirits badger us before God sows the seed of the Mystery *within* us. “Do this or God will be displeased. Don’t do that, or God will be displeased.”

Meanwhile, Christ knocks at the door of our hearts,¹³⁷ asking us to open the door so He can come *within* and live His Life *through* us.

We are born again by His Life *within* us,¹³⁸ changing our “want to”, bringing lasting good behavior, not rules and regulations. God’s Spirit *within* changes our “want to” and makes us new creatures.¹³⁹

Where is boasting?¹⁴⁰ It is excluded.

God told Ezekiel, “I will put my spirit *within* you and cause you to walk in my statutes, keep my judgments, and do them.”¹⁴¹

Jesus told the disciples, “The Spirit of Truth dwells with you now but soon will be *within* you.”¹⁴²

Jesus tell us, “My Spirit will guide you in all Truth.”¹⁴³

Can you hear His Voice *within*?

Have you opened the door?

¹³⁶ Matthew 23:4

¹³⁷ Revelation 3:20

¹³⁸ John 3:7

¹³⁹ 2nd Corinthians 5:17

¹⁴⁰ Romans 3:27

¹⁴¹ Ezekiel 11:19, 36-26-27

¹⁴² John 14:17

¹⁴³ John 16:13

Justification

The Mystery.

Grace & Mercy

A wise old deacon said, “It’s either *all* Grace, or it’s not Grace at all.”

Think on this.

“It’s either *all* Grace, or it’s not Grace at all.”

Words to pick scales of selfish pride from blind eyes.¹⁴⁴

The Mystery begins like the first pale sign of sunrise at the end of a long winter’s night. It starts here.

“It’s either *all* Grace, or it’s not Grace at all.”

To believe otherwise locks the door of your heart.

The Mystery exists by Grace and Grace alone. The Spirit of Truth *enters* us by Grace and Grace alone.

Jesus told His disciples before He was arrested by the priests, “You know the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot know or receive because of its blindness, because He dwells *with* you now. And soon, my friends, He will be *within* you.”¹⁴⁵

This is the Promise of Life.

This is the Mystery that’s been hidden.

“It’s either *all* Grace, or it’s not Grace at all!”

The Grace your Bible celebrates is more than “unmerited favor”. It is favor, of course, and it isn’t won by any merit of our own, but it is much, much more than “unmerited favor”.

It is “exceeding great good fortune” born of God’s Mercy.

It is by God’s Mercy *within* us that the world will soon be saved.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Acts 9:18

¹⁴⁵ John 14:17

¹⁴⁶ Romans 11:31

Grace & Mercy

Your Bible says God grants His Mercy *only* to those on whom He chooses to grant His Mercy.¹⁴⁷

That *is* what your Bible says.

God creates both light and darkness, peace and evil.¹⁴⁸ He grants Mercy to some and denies it to others. It is always His choice to grant Mercy, else Grace is not Grace!

Grace is given by God's choice to have Mercy.

If you get it, you get it.

If you don't, you don't.

That's how it works.

If your "self" thinks this is unfair, remember how God challenged Job, "Who are you to argue? Will you instruct God?"¹⁴⁹

God has Mercy on whom He has Mercy.

That settles it.

There's nothing you can do to change it.

You can't be "good enough".

You cannot "pray enough".

You cannot "give enough".

If you don't get it, you will fight against death when he comes, die with bitterness on your lips, and go with fear into an endless darkness where you will remain alone forever,¹⁵⁰ and there is *nothing* you can do about it but pray like your life depended on it.

It does!

Otherwise, Grace is not Grace.

¹⁴⁷ Romans 9:15

¹⁴⁸ Isaiah 45:7

¹⁴⁹ Job 40:2

¹⁵⁰ Romans 9:18

The Gospel Mystery

Whether we approve or not, God is God for all that.

Before we see Grace for what it is, we try to “work out our salvation”¹⁵¹, to get credit for our efforts and make God our debtor.

We don’t want a God who does as He pleases.

We want a God who does as *we* please. We want a God who is responsible to *us*, rewarding us with favors when we’re good, looking away and turning a deaf ear when we’re bad.

We want God to be what *we* want.

We don’t want God to have a Mind of His Own with freedom to choose whom He will save.

We want God to let *us* choose to be saved, when we get good and ready to do so.

Yet, God is God for all that, granting Mercy when and on whom He chooses.¹⁵²

God’s Election is sealed by His Mercy.

There’ll be no ballot recounts.

Otherwise Grace is not Grace.

Those who get Mercy receive “ears to hear” what the Word says *within* them.

Those who don’t get Mercy remain deaf to the Saving Faith that “comes by hearing” the Word *within*.¹⁵³

Solomon says, “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.”¹⁵⁴

“Let every man be false and only God be true.”¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Philippians 2:12

¹⁵² Exodus 33:19; Romans 9:15-18

¹⁵³ Romans 10:17; Galatians 3:2-5

¹⁵⁴ Psalms 11:10; Proverbs 1:17, 9:10

¹⁵⁵ Romans 3:4

Grace & Mercy

Logos who created you cannot be bribed.

Nor will He be commanded.

Search for Him and He will be found ... *if He chooses*.

Otherwise Grace is not Grace.

He desires to show Himself to you, as he showed Himself to Job, crucified and risen *within* you by Love that's sufficient for us all¹⁵⁶. Yet, He will not inhabit you as co-pilot, nor be your Santa Claus to hand you gifts in answer to your occasional prayers. Salvation is serious business!

God wants *all* of you.

The Pharisees taught that men can “earn” God’s favor. They made great efforts to appear righteous to each other, comparing themselves with themselves, competing to see who could be more “spiritual” and thereby rule others.¹⁵⁷

Jesus said they were “whitewashed tombs”, clean on the outside but filled with dead men’s bones.¹⁵⁸

Their doctrine that God’s favor could be purchased by the deeds of “self” ignored Old Testament scriptures they should have known. They were willing to be deceived. They sought the glory that is God’s alone. They worshipped the creature instead of the Creator.¹⁵⁹

Jesus called this doctrine “the leaven of the Pharisees”. He warns us to beware of its insidious ability to creep secretly into our “self” centered minds.¹⁶⁰

Leaven is stuff bakers use to make small lumps of dough puff up into full-sized loaves. The bread seems to “grow” as empty bubbles created by leaven form in the dough, making something small appear much larger than it is.

¹⁵⁶ 2nd Corinthians 12:9

¹⁵⁷ 2nd Corinthians 10:12

¹⁵⁸ Matthew 23:25-26

¹⁵⁹ Ecclesiastes 11:5; Isaiah 45:7

¹⁶⁰ Matthew 16:6; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1

The Gospel Mystery

Those to whom God reveals the Mystery see clearly the leaven of pride *within* themselves and hate it, as Job hated his pride.

They see the Mystery at work *within*, replacing “self” with Christ, performing spiritual surgery on hardened hearts.¹⁶¹

Pride¹⁶² denies that *all* good things come from God.¹⁶³

God resists the proud,¹⁶⁴ and God always wins!

If we could gain God’s Grace by our effort, then Grace is not Grace,¹⁶⁵ and Jesus died for nothing.

God’s Mercy is by Grace, and His Grace is by Mercy.¹⁶⁶

This is how we learn what true love is.

A passage in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians is a doctrinal cornerstone of many churches today. He writes, “By Grace you are saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.”¹⁶⁷

Few understand.¹⁶⁸ Many are told it’s *their* faith that saves them. They are told, “You must have faith”. They are warned it is impossible to please God unless they “have faith”.

So they struggle all their lives to “have faith”, hoping to “have enough”.¹⁶⁹

That’s *not* God’s Perfect Plan.

Did you read where Paul said, “not of yourselves”?

Did you read where he said, “It is the gift of God?”

¹⁶¹ Ezekiel 36:26

¹⁶² 1st John 5:10

¹⁶³ James 1:17

¹⁶⁴ James 4:6; 1st Peter 5:5

¹⁶⁵ Romans 11:6

¹⁶⁶ James 1:7

¹⁶⁷ Ephesians 2:8

¹⁶⁸ Matthew 19:11

¹⁶⁹ Hebrews 11:6

Grace & Mercy

What is he saying is “the gift of God”?

Grace or Faith?

What does your Bible say?

Then, if the Faith that saves is “not of yourselves”, whose Faith is it?

You know you cannot manufacture Faith. You’ve tried. We all have.

It is His Faith that saves you. God’s Work pleases God. God’s work *in* you! Faith that pleases God is “of Him”, not us.¹⁷⁰ Faith that pleases God is the Faith of Christ alive *within* us who are saved.

None of us can manufacture the Faith that pleases God by our own effort, nor by study,¹⁷¹ fasting, tithing, or shaving our head. Faith comes by Grace and Grace alone ... not of ourselves. It is the Gift of God, not anything we do, lest “self” should boast!¹⁷²

Your Bible says, “Faith comes by hearing,”¹⁷³ then adds, “and hearing by the Word of God.”¹⁷⁴ However, the “Word of God” is not your Bible or any other book. The “Word of God” is the Word Himself, speaking *within* you by His Still Small Voice. It is He whom we must hear to have His Faith that saves.

All else is make-believe, the torture of trying to “have” what only comes by “hearing the Word”, the *Logos*, the Voice of God Himself *within* you.

God may “speak” from the pages of your Bible but, unless you “hear” His Voice *within* you, all you read is merely “learning”, not “hearing”.

¹⁷⁰ Ephesians 3:12

¹⁷¹ Ecclesiastes 12:12

¹⁷² Ephesians 2:9

¹⁷³ Romans 10:17; Galatians 3:2-5

¹⁷⁴ Romans 10:17

The Gospel Mystery

God wants you “transformed by the renewing of your mind”.¹⁷⁵

God re-minds us when the Word comes alive *within* us, we hear His Voice,¹⁷⁶ and we choose to silence “self”.

We choose.

Your Bible says, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end of that way is death.”¹⁷⁷ That way is trying to win God’s approval, to make God our debtor, to earn His blessings. That way “seems right” but leads to death.

The way we please God is by “being renewed”, opening the door of our hearts and pleading for His Spirit of Truth to come *within* us to will and do His Pleasure.¹⁷⁸

There is no other way!

The Word we need to hear to “have Faith” is the *Logos* speaking *within* us, God Himself, as John says in the opening passage of his Gospel.

In the beginning was the *Logos*.

The *Logos* is not a book.

In the beginning was the Word.

The Word is not a book.

God is not a book.

Read your Bible to find that those who wrote what you read in your Bible also knew this to be true.

The Word is God, who makes kittens, cauliflower, corn, and carnations.

By God’s Mercy you may “hear” the Still Small Voice of His Word speaking *within* you and be transformed.

¹⁷⁵ Romans 12:2; Titus 3:5

¹⁷⁶ Philippians 2:5

¹⁷⁷ Proverbs 16:25

¹⁷⁸ Philippians 2:13

Grace & Mercy

“This is the way. Walk in it.”¹⁷⁹ There is no other way.

Faith comes by hearing the Word who *is* God.

Faith comes by hearing God *within*, not by memorizing the tenets of men’s disputed doctrines.

Faith knows!¹⁸⁰

Faith that saves souls is free from doubt.

True Faith, sure Faith, unshakeable Faith, eternal Faith, can never be deceived.¹⁸¹ It is planted in us like a tiny mustard seed when by God’s Mercy we hear Him speaking *within* us, working His Will *through* us by the Counsel of His Spirit of Truth that cannot lie.¹⁸²

The Mystery.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Isaiah 30:21

¹⁸⁰ Romans 12:2; 2nd Corinthians 11:15

¹⁸¹ Galatians 6:7

¹⁸² 1st John 2:27

¹⁸³ 2nd Corinthians 6:14-18

The Evidence

Paul writes about the “earnest” of our inheritance.¹⁸⁴

That word is used today by lawyers writing contracts (i.e., promises to perform something in the future) that require a down payment (also called “earnest money”). The “earnest” of a contract is a deposit made in advance of performance to show good faith of the promisor, assuring the promisee that the balance of his bargain is forthcoming.

The “earnest” of our inheritance is the experience we have of God’s indwelling presence alive *within* us, speaking to us, guiding us, assuring us that what He has begun He most assuredly will finish.

Paul experienced God’s “down payment”. He was so excited he and friend Barnabus left all they’d ever known to share the good news with a waiting world. They traveled far beyond the borders of their homeland Israel. They were cold, hungry, beaten, imprisoned, even shipwrecked. Yet nothing could dissuade them from proclaiming that “down payment” and the Mystery that assured them God Himself was *within*.

Paul experienced God’s work, transforming him *within*.

He says, “God has sealed us by the earnest of His Spirit in our hearts!”¹⁸⁵ He *knew* God was *within* him.

He hated what he’d been before. His “want to” changed. He was transformed, and he *knew* that God would finish what God had begun!¹⁸⁶

This confidence (a word meaning “faith with”) is what believers cling to, confidence that comes when we hear the

¹⁸⁴ 2nd Corinthians 1:22, 5:5; Ephesians 1:14

¹⁸⁵ 2nd Corinthians 1:22

¹⁸⁶ Philippians 1:6

The Evidence

Word *within* us, not by our doing but by His Mercy, not by our deserving but by His Grace.¹⁸⁷

This *is* the Truth!

Paul rejoiced even in suffering. He *knew* his “self” must die so his New Life by Christ’s Spirit *within* him could achieve God’s Goal. He said his present suffering did not even begin to compare with the glory he *knew* would be revealed in all in whom God begins His Work.¹⁸⁸

A Gift by Mercy and Grace, not by works, lest any man should boast.

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen.”¹⁸⁹

Saving Faith is not the “flimsy faith” our unregenerate souls struggle to manufacture and fearfully cling to before we hear the Word *within* that sows the “mustard seed” of True Faith, as Jesus explains,¹⁹⁰ the tiny seed that becomes a giant, living hope within us, evidence of things hoped for and not yet seen.

Paul experienced Mystery at work *within* him, heard the Word, and had this Faith that doubts nothing.

Paul was a first-hand, eye witness of his new desire and new behavior that others also saw.¹⁹¹

God removed scales from Paul’s eyes so he could see.¹⁹²

The witness of God’s Spirit *within* was Paul’s assurance of “more to come”, evidence God’s Work had begun, down payment on the promise that God’s Work *within* Paul would be completed when Paul’s labors on this earth were finished.

¹⁸⁷ Hebrews 12:12

¹⁸⁸ Romans 8:18

¹⁸⁹ Hebrews 11:1

¹⁹⁰ Matthew 13:31

¹⁹¹ Acts 9:21

¹⁹² Acts 9:18

The Gospel Mystery

Paul spread the Mystery to all the world, insisting it was no longer he who worked, but God at work *within* him.¹⁹³

Evidence the Mystery is *real!*

Evidence the Mystery truly is our Salvation.

God made Paul ambassador¹⁹⁴ of the Mystery.

God made Paul minister¹⁹⁵ of the Mystery.

And God caused Paul to *desire* to go into all the world boldly proclaiming the Mystery with joy and assurance.

Paul was called by God to liberate souls from the lies of religious leaders who, threatened by the growing popularity of his teachings, immediately sought to kill him¹⁹⁶ as they killed the prophets, killed the followers of Jesus, and succeeded in deceiving Pilate into killing Jesus on that lonely Cross from which the rooster crows to each of us today.

Paul had no fear of men, however powerful politically they might be. He was compelled by Faith's Witness *within* him to fulfill his mission to proclaim the Mystery, unable to do otherwise,¹⁹⁷ because he knew the transformation at work *within* him was real, promising Liberty and Life Eternal to all whose ears are opened by God's Mercy to hear the Word of God *within*.

We pray you also hear God's call to be ambassador and minister of this Mystery with us.

“The earnest of our inheritance,” Paul preached, is our assurance that what Jesus purchased with His Blood is the Treasure of Faith that redeems lost souls “to the praise of His Glory.”¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ 2nd Corinthians 1:22; 5:5

¹⁹⁴ 2nd Corinthians 5:20

¹⁹⁵ Colossians 1:23-25

¹⁹⁶ Acts 9:23-24

¹⁹⁷ 1st Corinthians 9:16

¹⁹⁸ Ephesians 1:14

The Evidence

Paul knew he was saved, heir to God's Eternal Salvation.

He heard the Word *within* bearing witness that Salvation had begun, not by his work or his faith, but by the Faith that came alive when he heard the Word *within*.

God *within* was all the evidence Paul needed, no longer any reason to doubt. He saw he was being transformed by God's Work *within*, setting him free from anger, pride, ego, and fear.

Free to love!

“Saving Faith” comes by hearing the Word *within*, the Word who *is* God!

Extremely great good fortune for all who receive it.

Is God speaking *within* you?

The Mystery.

Godly Sorrow

God heals broken hearts.

But first hearts must be broken.

There is no other way.

Before that joyous day when we awaken to the gentle whisper of God's Loving Voice *within* (if, indeed, His Mercy allows) our hearts are hardened by memory of our past faults, surrounded by walls we built to keep others from learning our secret truths, protecting the pride of "self" who proclaims we are "good enough" just as we are.

Something outside us must strike a mighty blow to break through the defense devices within which we've been hiding all our lives. Something must force us to look *within* and see the fortress of pride where "self" is hiding from the Truth of God.

A hardened heart is only broken by Godly sorrow.

This isn't the "sorrow" we feel when we get caught.

This isn't the sorrow we feel when we don't get our way.

Godly Sorrow is something much more than that.

A story from your Bible will explain.

Before Jesus was taken to be crucified, Peter promised to stand by Him no matter what. Peter said he would never be ashamed of Jesus. He said he would never turn away.¹⁹⁹ His "self" said, "Though I lose my life with you, I will never deny you."²⁰⁰

Jesus calmly replied, "Peter, you will deny me three times before the rooster crows tomorrow morning."²⁰¹

Jesus knew "self" ruled that old fisherman.

¹⁹⁹ Matthew 26:33

²⁰⁰ Matthew 26:35

²⁰¹ Matthew 26:34

Godly Sorrow

He knows “self” rules us all before we are broken. We are all too much like Peter was before that rooster crowed.

The night Judas betrayed Jesus to the soldiers who took orders from the Sanhedrin (the judicial court of Jerusalem and priests of the Jewish Temple charged with carrying out the Law of Moses) Jesus and His disciples were gathered on a little hill in a grove of olive trees outside the eastern gate of the city of Jerusalem.

This is where Jesus wept.²⁰²

This is where He prayed, while His disciples slept.²⁰³

This is where He sweat blood in agony, knowing soon He would be nailed hands and feet to an old wooden Cross and left to hang there until dead.²⁰⁴

In the dark of that terrible night, Judas led the priests’ soldiers to the Mount of Olives as he promised the priests in exchange for a sack of 30 silver coins. He knew the soldiers would take Jesus by force to be delivered to the priests who foolishly hoped His death would end their political problems and secure continuation of their corrupt power.

So, when the armed band arrived in that little grove of olive trees, Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss, as he promised the priests, so the soldiers would know which man to seize.

The soldiers led Jesus away to be tried in a kangaroo midnight trial contrary to Jewish law.

Peter followed safely at a distance.

The soldiers took Jesus into the city. They led Him into a house then waited outside, warming themselves by a fire in the courtyard where curious spectators began to assemble.

Peter hid in the shadows.

²⁰² John 11:35

²⁰³ Matthew 26:40; Mark 14:37

²⁰⁴ Luke 22:44

The Gospel Mystery

A young woman approached him, “You were with Jesus of Galilee.”²⁰⁵

Peter replied, “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” then moved farther from the light of the fire.²⁰⁶

Another woman then pointed at him hiding in the dark and said to those by the fire, “That fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.”²⁰⁷

With a fisherman’s oath this time, Peter said, “I do not know the man!”

The crowd moved toward him, accusing him, “You are surely one of them. The manner of your speech betrays you.”

Peter now began to *curse* and *swear*.

He said, “I know not that man!”

The rooster crowed.

.....

What Peter felt at that moment was Godly Sorrow.

He remembered Jesus’ warning, “Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times.”

He heard that rooster crow and saw proud “self” *within* for the first time and was ashamed, like Job, hating what he had been, wanting to be changed.

He saw “self” cowering in shadows, afraid for his life.

He heard “self” saying to Jesus, “I will never deny you.”

He hated what he saw.

He hated what he heard.

²⁰⁵ Matthew 26:69

²⁰⁶ Matthew 26:70

²⁰⁷ Matthew 26:71

Godly Sorrow

He abhorred himself, as Job did, wishing he could just crawl into a hole and disappear.

Godly Sorrow triggered True Repentance²⁰⁸ in that old fisherman when he heard God speak *within* him by the Word and a rooster's crow that broke his heart completely.

His proud "self" was shattered. Your Bible says he "wept bitterly".²⁰⁹ He felt that special shame by which God starts to change us from *within*.

John Bradshaw calls it "healthy shame" in his Healing the Shame that Binds You.²¹⁰

Godly Sorrow is "good sorrow", healthy shame.

Godly sorrow is the *only* force that can bring us to our spiritual knees and start the work of True Repentance.

As ducklings start life breaking through the shell of their eggs, so Eternal Life starts for us when God breaks through the false shell we build around ourselves, shattering the pride of "self" by this special sorrow that shows the truth of what we are apart from God.

Truth that heals will hurt for a season but, by Grace the pain is only for a moment, and then the healing begins.

Truth breaks through our shell to save us, showing us how much we need God's Spirit of Truth *within*.

Godly Sorrow "works in us what is pleasing in God's sight".²¹¹ Godly Sorrow transforms us by renewing our minds.²¹² Godly Sorrow brings the only Real Repentance we will ever know.

We cannot "repent" by an act of our own will.

²⁰⁸ 2nd Corinthians 7:9-11

²⁰⁹ Matthew 26:75

²¹⁰ Health Communications, Inc.; Deerfield Beach, FL

²¹¹ Hebrews 13:21

²¹² Romans 12:2

The Gospel Mystery

Our “self” can put on an act for the benefit of others, but deep down “self” remains unchanged and unrepentant in any True sense until our “soul” experiences Godly Sorrow, as Peter did when that rooster crowed.

Repentance is God’s Work, not ours.

Only Godly Sorrow can trigger our desire to *be* changed completely. Only Godly Sorrow can make us wish to be free from “self” forever. Only Godly Sorrow can open our ears to hear the Word by whom Faith is born by Grace. Only Godly Sorrow can open the door of our hearts to make room for Christ to enter.

Godly Sorrow is the winnowing fan Christ wields on the threshing floor of our heart, separating the chaff of “self” from the wheat of His Work, making our heart His Kingdom, purged of the lies we once believed.²¹³

Godly Sorrow comes to us by Grace according to God’s Mercy. We can no more force ourselves to desire change than we can repent by making up our mind to do so.

Repentance is not “turning around”.

Repentance is “being turned”, God’s work, not ours.

To believe otherwise is foolish pride that leads surely to ruin in this life and eternal desolation after death.

The work of Repentance begins when God speaks *within* us, when we hear a rooster crow, and sorrow strikes “self” its fatal blow.

It may be the sudden death of a loved one we mistreated, addiction that destroyed the life of a friend we abandoned, or crime that imprisons a child we failed to love and encourage.

Or, it may be waking one morning, looking in a mirror, and seeing the face of someone destroyed by bad decisions,

²¹³ Matthew 3:12

Godly Sorrow

addicted to ambition, trapped by a bottle, or deceived by the lie of immoral sex.

The rooster wakes us from our night of self-deceit.

Mortality looms over us, and eternal death is too horrible a sentence to endure alone.

Repentance begins when we realize, as Peter did when his rooster crowed, we are too far removed from what we ought to be, and only God can make us right.

By God's Mercy the rooster of Grace may crow in time, before death lays us down to sleep beneath our coffin lid.

Has a rooster crowed in *your* life?

Have you hit "rock bottom" yet?

Is your mirror smiling back at you, or are you still hiding with demons who insist you are "good enough" already?

We love to favor ourselves with false forgiveness.

We love to think we are "good enough".

We love to sing the old hymn, "Just as I Am", choosing not to hear those words ignore our need to "be changed".

We hide from the Truth who *is* God, childishly hoping God will save us "as we are", without being changed, without being transformed into the image of Christ.²¹⁴

It scratches the itching ears of "self" to think that way.²¹⁵

But, it is stinking thinking that fosters hypocrisy that the world sees through and hates, engendering hope for Eternal Life that the unchanged "self" cannot inherit, and preventing Love from flowing through us from the Source who is and ever shall be God in Christ and Christ in us.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ Romans 8:29

²¹⁵ 2nd Timothy 4:3

²¹⁶ John 17:23

The Gospel Mystery

We block the Mercy that alone can save our souls, miss the best things life can give us in this brief moment, and cheat ourselves by cheating Him who loves us most, refusing to be changed by the Spirit of Truth *within*.

We miss the joy-filled adventure of being guided daily by the Voice of Love Himself *within*.

We choose to be masters of our fate, instead of allowing Christ to direct our paths by His Still Small Voice *within*.

Sufferings of Christ should make us weep.

Sufferings we cause others and by which disappoint our Creator (who also weeps²¹⁷) should shatter our hearts and make us want desperately to be changed completely. Godly Sorrow should render us disgusted with what we've been and what we are today. Tears we cause others should wash away the blindness "self" imposes on our soul, so we can see as Job saw and repent as Job repented.

Then God can begin and finish His Work *within*.

We cannot have new life until we cast our old life aside.

The Work of Christ was finished at the Cross.²¹⁸

His Work *in* us must now begin!

If you've not yet heard a rooster call to repentance, pray earnestly for "ears to hear".

Grace was purchased by innocent blood and lonely tears. Let the blood and tears teach our hearts to truly repent.

Godly Sorrow begins in a moment, then lifts us from the darkness we willingly, eagerly leave behind. Godly Sorrow transforms us into someone new. Godly Sorrow enables us to truly love, to truly care, to truly want to be changed and to lift others as we are lifted, away from what we were before.

²¹⁷ John 11:35

²¹⁸ John 19:30

Godly Sorrow

Grace hides from “self” who dwells alone *within*,²¹⁹ yet promises a Kingdom of peace and justice where lambs lie in safety with lions, where divisions between us are destroyed²²⁰ and we sit together with Him.²²¹

Life Eternal is Christ’s Life *within* us who are saved

It starts before we die, or it never starts at all.

God’s Plan is a narrow path.

God’s Plan is a detour from the broad highway of worldly thinking that brings sorrow in this lifetime and eternal death beyond.²²²

Pray for eyes to see and ears to hear.

Follow not blind teachers who cannot see their “self” *within*.

Listen not to deaf teachers who do not hear the Word *within*.²²³

Because Salvation is a Gift that comes by the Mystery at work *within* us and not by our own doing, none of us is above another, all are brothers and sisters, all priests, and only One is “Father” ... God alone, the Word, the *Logos!*
²²⁴

Paul tells the Ephesians, “We are saved through faith *and that not of ourselves.*”²²⁵

God speaks the Word and Faith is born *within* us only when Godly Sorrow opens our unwilling ears.

The Word that speaks *within* is the *Logos*, making flowers grow, babies giggle, and roosters crow.

²¹⁹ Matthew 15:9; 16:12; Mark 7:7; Ephesians 4:14; Colossians 2:22

²²⁰ John 17:11, 21-23

²²¹ Ephesians 2:6

²²² Matthew 7:13

²²³ Matthew 15:14; Luke 6:39

²²⁴ Matthew 23:9

²²⁵ Ephesians 2:8

The Gospel Mystery

God's Still Small Voice.²²⁶

The Mystery.

²²⁶ 1st Kings 19:12

Faith

A friend who encourages you to, “Just have faith,” as if any of us could just “have faith” just by gritting our teeth or crossing our fingers, is without knowledge.²²⁷

Your friend may mean well, but if your friend doesn’t know that Faith is born by hearing the Word who is God *within* you (and not something we can manufacture by just “having faith”) please explain what you are learning from our little book and from the references we make to your Bible.

“Faith comes by hearing the Word,”²²⁸ the Voice of God.

Faith may come *with* preaching, but Faith does not come *by* preaching.

Faith may come *with* reading your Bible, but Faith does not come *by* reading your Bible.

Faith comes, if it comes at all, by the Word speaking to you directly ... *within* you!

The Word comes in such a Still Small Voice you must quiet your talkative “self” and every distracting spirit to hear Him at all. “Be still,” He tells us, “and know I Am is God.”²²⁹

The Mystery still hidden from so many!

His almost silent Voice may seem to be behind you, in the back of your mind, yet you will know His Loving Spirit is speaking *within* you,²³⁰ because you will feel His Love.

Your soul will *know* the Word is He!

You will joyfully ignore the voice of “self” and the din of lying spirits telling you it isn’t, because you will *know* it is!

²²⁷ Hosea 4:6

²²⁸ Romans 10:17

²²⁹ Psalms 46:10

²³⁰ Isaiah 30:21

The Gospel Mystery

He never speaks harshly nor threatens in any way.²³¹

God is Love.

God is Truth.

You will feel His Gentle Presence.

You will sense His Loving Smile.

Lying spirits will tell you the Voice you hear is only your old “self”, but those spirits are defeated by the Word *within*.

You will *know* Truth is speaking, not “self” or a demon.

You will *know* Love is speaking *within* you.

Life Without End.

The Merciful Gift of Grace none can earn or merit.

By His Still Small Voice *within*, unwavering Faith is born.

His Faith!

It may seem you are only “feeling” what He says, so gentle is His Voice, but that’s because He speaks not to the mechanism of your fleshly brain but to your immortal *soul!*

He is melding with “you”, clothing you with Christ, transforming you, and your Eternal Life is now beginning.

He is securing your life from death by the Power of the Mystery that is God’s Work *within* you.

New Life!

The demons will try to deafen you to His Voice, to draw you back into darkness, but once you’ve tasted this Heavenly Gift and known the presence of His Holy Ghost *within* you, it is impossible for you to fall away.²³²

You are being transformed.²³³

²³¹ Romans 8:15; 2nd Timothy 1:7

²³² Hebrews 6:4-5; 1st Peter 2:3

²³³ Romans 12:2

Faith

You are becoming a new creature.²³⁴

You are being born again!²³⁵

God speaks to your *soul*.

Faith is now undoubtable!

No one can “have faith” by merely deciding to do so.

No one gets Faith *by* reading a book.

No one gets Faith *by* listening to someone preach.

Faith comes, if ever it comes, by hearing the Word who *is* God speaking *within*.

Faith comes when God decides to grant His Mercy.

Faith comes by Grace or Faith comes not at all.

The Faith that saves is “not of yourself”.²³⁶

Faith is the Gift of God, “lest any man should boast”.²³⁷

If God chooses you to inherit His Kingdom *within*,²³⁸ you will have it by Grace, or you will never have it at all.

Faith is given by His Mercy to whom He chooses.²³⁹

Those who tell you “have faith”, as if it were a prize you could win or a product you could buy in a jar, are deceived.

If God chooses to grant you Mercy, you will hear the Word by His Voice *within* you.

Faith comes by hearing His Voice, the Word.

There is no other way!

Faith comes by His Incarnate Presence *within* you.

²³⁴ Galatians 6:15

²³⁵ John 3:7

²³⁶ Ephesians 2:8

²³⁷ Ephesians 2:9

²³⁸ Luke 17:21

²³⁹ Romans 9:15-18

The Gospel Mystery

His Faith, not yours.

He alone will save you, if ever you are saved.

This Mystery is our hope of Glory.

Our *only* hope.

He Himself is the New Life.

He Himself born *within* you.

He Himself, whose Life never ends!

You can't get His Life or His Faith by giving money, reading books, attending church, singing in choirs, or sacrificing your life to save others.

If you receive the Mystery and the Saving Faith that comes only by the Mystery, it will be because you ask God as children ask loving parents for food and safety, because God grants you His Mercy, in His Way, in His Time.

You will have it not a moment sooner.

And, if God decides, you will never have it.

It's either all Grace, or it's not Grace at all.

Exceeding great good fortune, not anything *you* can do apart from praying constantly for God's Mercy!²⁴⁰

Faith comes by hearing the Word *within*.

Period.

To believe otherwise is blindness and death.

We receive only what God gives according to His Mercy.

Those who receive Faith by the Word speaking *within* are at once aware it is a Free Gift they don't deserve, and they are humbled by it.

They know they cannot "humble themselves" as they are humbled by God's Gift, and true humility begins by Grace.

²⁴⁰ 1st Thessalonians 5:17

Faith

They confess His Work to all who will hear.

“Freely you have received,” Jesus says, “so freely give.”

They who know the Mystery of His Gospel²⁴¹ *within* also know His Peace²⁴² and freely confess His Work to others.

Jesus makes clear, “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”²⁴³

What do *you* have that you have not been given?

What do I or any of us?

Absolutely nothing!

We have and are what God allows *when* God allows *if* God allows.

Talent, possessions, health, love, life itself ... all by God’s Grace and God’s Mercy.

The root of every sin is the lie that we are in control of our destiny, that we are masters of our fate, that we have the power to be good or bad and, by our choice, can make God our debtor to reward us with eternal life.

This is the way that leads to death.

Your enemy is a liar and father of lies.

Your enemy opposes Truth.

Your enemy works constantly to deceive both men and nations by lies that always lead to ruin and destruction.

Proudly the lost march madly to death believing lies.

If we persist in loving lies so “self” may continue basking in temporary pleasures, instead of silencing “self” to hear His Loving Voice while there’s yet time to do so, God may *remove* His Mercy forever, harden our heart, and leave us to find our way alone through the troubles of the time

²⁴¹ Matthew 10:8

²⁴² John 14:27

²⁴³ John 3:27

The Gospel Mystery

remaining in this life and through the chartless darkness on the other side.

When breath has ceased and icy death wraps our fleshly body in its grasp, where will “self” be then?

All is only as He chooses it to be.²⁴⁴

A hardened heart is the end of hope.

A hardened heart can't see the emptiness within, won't hear the children weeping in this world, has no remorse for the consequence of its selfish sins.

A hardened heart sorrows only for its own sufferings, but that's not Godly Sorrow.

A hardened heart will not remember to pray.

A hardened heart, like mediocrity, knows nothing higher than “self”.

By the Mystery, God “re-minds” us.

A New Mind.

A New Creature.

A New Life that lasts forever!

Paul writes, “Let *this* mind be in you that was in Jesus.”²⁴⁵

Will you do good tomorrow if God does not give you His desire to do good?

Do you think your desire to help others is innately your own, apart from God's Will?

Do you think you do good because *you* are good?

Do you think there is goodness in *any* of us apart from what God gives by His Merciful Grace?²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ John 12:40; Romans 9:18

²⁴⁵ Philippians 2:5

²⁴⁶ Matthew 19:17; Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19

Faith

Two Boy Scouts stand on opposite corners of a busy city intersection, each prepared to escort a blind person across the street. Both succeed in getting their respective charges safely to the other side. One Scout to obey the Scout Slogan, “Do a good turn daily.” The other Scout to help another soul who, but for the Grace of God, might be himself, blind and alone in the midst of danger.

Both did a good thing.

Which deed was “better”?

Were both deeds the same?

One acted out of “self” to obey a slogan.

The other out of Love God put in his Boy Scout heart.

Which was more blessed?

When our deeds are as God woos us to do them, then they are His deeds, His Work *within* us.

Only God is good.

Jesus said, “There is *none* good, no not one!”²⁴⁷

To believe otherwise only glorifies “self” who must die.

All our strength, knowledge, achievements, dreams, and goals are only what God allows by His Glance of Grace.

Unmerited favor, exceeding great good fortune.

We turn from our wicked ways when we hear the rooster crow, despise our sin, and repent with tears of Godly Sorrow.

Tears alone can wash unrighteousness from our hearts.

Godly Sorrow works repentance.²⁴⁸ Nothing else does.

God is the potter.

²⁴⁷ Matthew 19:17; Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19

²⁴⁸ 2nd Corinthians 7:10

The Gospel Mystery

We are His clay.

God alone decides to mold us into lovers or liars, saints or sinners, builders or bombers, captains or crewmembers.²⁴⁹

This is what your Bible teaches.

The Mystery too often hidden by the lies of this world's religious leaders who earn their bread by tickling guilty ears.

Though He decides whom to save and whom to send to eternal darkness, there is no unrighteousness with God.²⁵⁰

In this Mystery of Grace there is a Loving Purpose and a Plan past our ability to understand in human terms.²⁵¹

God seeks fellowship with Christ our Life *within*.²⁵²

God is the cause of causes, all power and wisdom, yet alone within His Creation seeking fellowship with those in whom He sows the seed of Perfect Love by Christ's Spirit.

Care you for God's loneliness?

Have you any desire to please Him who made you and gives you all you have, food, music, life?

Has God's need for your love been considered?

Jesus prayed in the olive grove while his disciples went to sleep, leaving Him alone that night before he was taken by the soldiers, and Jesus wept.

Have you heard that rooster crow?

All that is, or ever was, or ever shall be is forevermore according to His Will.²⁵³

²⁴⁹ Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 18:6; Romans 9:21

²⁵⁰ Romans 9:14-24

²⁵¹ John 3:9

²⁵² 1st Corinthians 1:19; Ephesians 1:18; Philippians 4:7

²⁵³ Isaiah 45:7

Faith

Everything is and forever shall be according to His Will, in His Time, in His Way.

The terrible things God allows in our world, things we see with mortal eyes as hatefully horrible and in our minds surely not the work of a “loving god” (earthquakes, floods, even death that comes to all) has a Good Purpose we don’t understand. We cannot see His Purpose, because our eyes are merely mortal, our hearing jammed by jabbering “self” and lying spirits, our understanding cramped by inability to grasp the wonder of eternity. We barely know the sum of what is in this present moment, much less the Eternal Plan of God by which He maps out millions of millennia.

We see, as Paul confesses in his writings, through a pane of smoke-stained glass.²⁵⁴

God sees Forever!

When the persecutor Saul (named Paul after conversion) was blinded by the Lord’s appearing to him in a brilliant light on a road to Damascus (where he’d been commissioned by priests to find and punish followers of Jesus) *Logos* told him this same Truth.

God’s Holy Spirit said to him, “It is hard for you to kick against the pricks,”²⁵⁵ referring to the stupidity of oxen who kicked back against the sharp spikes men fixed on the front of wagons to teach the foolishness of trying to get loose from the load behind by kicking.

To kick against the “pricks” does nothing to release the beasts from their burden.

It results only in needless suffering.

The weary truth of our heavily burdened wagon of “self” remains unchanged, no matter how hard we kick.

To kick at reality is just plain stupid and usually painful.

²⁵⁴ 1st Corinthians 13:12

²⁵⁵ Acts 9:5; 26:14

The Gospel Mystery

God doesn't change.

We may not like it. We can get angry with God, dissolve our memory in alcohol, deceive ourselves with drugs, become obsessed with sex, bury ourselves in work, or kick the sharp spikes of life in many other ways.

But, God remains unchanged, no matter how we kick.

It's how it is.

We only hurt ourselves by kicking.

Either God has Mercy and saves us, or we kick in vain.

Either God builds our future, or we labor in vain who try to build it ourselves.²⁵⁶

Why kick?

God made us, not we ourselves.

We are the sheep of His pasture.²⁵⁷

We are not captains of our souls nor masters of our fate, as Henley wrote in his silly poem, "Invictus".

If we think we are more than clay in the Loving Hands of the Master Potter, we are building our future on a lie.

If we think we are "in charge", the Truth is not *in* us.

If we think God is still *outside* us, we are lost.²⁵⁸

God allows us the degree of health we possess today.

God permits us to achieve what we accomplish today.

And, God can take it all away with one missed heartbeat.

All that is is according to His Will, His Mercy, His Grace.

What do you have that you have not received? Nothing!

²⁵⁶ Psalm 127:1

²⁵⁷ Psalm 100:3

²⁵⁸ John 14:17; 16:13

Faith

Pray for the Merciful Grace of God to open more ears to hear the Word *within*. Then, by hearing, to receive the Faith that changes lives and leads to Eternal Salvation.

Not the self-willed “faith” men struggle to “have”.

His Faith alive *within* them doing His Work.

The Mystery.

The New Life

“No one puts new wine in an old wineskin,” Jesus warns, “or the wineskin will break and both will be lost.”²⁵⁹

New wine in Jesus’ day was fresh-squeezed grape juice, unfermented, free from alcohol. Travelers on foot, like Jesus and his wandering disciples, carried juice in “canteens” made from animal skins. Water has no nutrients. It can only quench thirst. Fresh fruit juice can keep a tired man walking without food for many days.

Fresh or fermented, people of that day referred to it as “wine”, making no distinction as to fresh-squeezed “new wine” or old fermented alcoholic wine (costlier, harder to find, and unable to quench thirst effectively).

According to an “expert” I met long ago, juice squeezed from *any* fruit is “wine”.

My expert’s name was Ernest Modesto. He was born in Modesto, California on New Year’s Day 1900. His place of birth is famous for its grapes, citrus, apples, apricots, peaches, nectarines, and other juice fruits.

We met on his 70th birthday. I was driving a lonely stretch of road heading south for the winter. It was a cold, gray and drizzly day. He was shuffling along on foot, soaked to the skin, toting all he owned in an old burlap bag thrown over his shoulder.

I pulled off the road to offer him a lift. He obliged politely, and off we went in search of warmer, drier weather farther south.

He asked my vocation. I told him.

I asked, “What line of work are you in?”

“Wino,” was his unusual reply.

²⁵⁹ Matthew 9:17, Mark 2:22, Luke 5:37-38

The New Life

“Oh” I replied nervously. In those days, before God started teaching me by His Mystery *within*, I’d not yet learned my enemy’s ways. I drank whatever I could get my hands on.

I said, “I like Merlot.”

“That’s *dead* wine!” he shot back with a fatherly frown.

The word “dead” stuck in my brain.

I asked, “What kind of wine do *you* drink?”

“I drink *fresh* wine,” he replied with a smile, then rattled off the names of at least two-dozen kinds of fruit from which he squeezed “wine”, his life’s passion.

Ernest Modesto was the only true “wino” I ever met.

When I was a lad of eight or nine, my grandfather took me on a trip to New York City where we saw another kind of wino. Homeless drunks lay sleeping on sidewalks or dead in the gutters. Most of them, even some of the corpses, clutched an empty wine bottle wrapped in a brown paper bag, as if the bottle were their final friend.

Ernest Modesto was no such wino.

He loved what Jesus called “new wine”, fresh-squeezed juice. He spent his life in search of “new wine”. He worked as a nomadic fruit-picker, traveling on foot coast-to-coast with all his belongings in a burlap sack, following seasons, finding work wherever he could, drinking his wine at its freshest.

He didn’t drink *dead* wine.

Nor did Jesus.

He drank what Jesus calls “new wine”.

Jesus’ enemies called Him a “wine bibber”,²⁶⁰ a man addicted to intoxicating drink.

²⁶⁰ Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:34

The Gospel Mystery

But, “new wine” has no alcohol. It’s unfermented juice. It hasn’t begun to form bubbles of gas the way juice will if let to sit long enough.

Jesus warns us not to put “new wine in old wineskins” lest the expanding gas burst the bag, the wine spill out, and our wine skin be ruined.

More than a metaphor.

The Mystery seeks to pour “new wine” into your life, fresh, vitalizing, transforming, life-giving.

Before we can receive it, however, we must toss out the “old wine” and our old “wine skin”.

We aren’t going back!

We want *everything* new.²⁶¹

No room for the old preconceptions, traditions, and doctrines that put “self” in control of our destiny.

We can choose to think we control our destiny and drive our lives to ruin and destruction, or ask God to take over as pilot, navigator, confidant, friend ... heeding the counsel of the Word *within* speaking to us with His Still Small Voice and enjoying life to the full.²⁶²

Out with the old. In with the new.

We cannot serve two masters.²⁶³ That statement, too, is much misunderstood. We are warned against the “love of money” not because we might “serve” it, but because it can counterfeit Grace. Money can make a man hide from God, thinking he can buy health and happiness apart from God’s Grace. This is the sin of money. The bitter root of money has nothing to do with desire for money. There’s nothing wrong with wanting more money. The error comes with the lie that money can buy all we need.

²⁶¹ 2nd Corinthians 5:17

²⁶² John 10:10

²⁶³ Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13

The New Life

Either God guides our pocketbook, or we do.

Who will we put in charge?

If money controls our decisions, our end will be disaster.

If God's Voice deep *inside* is given control, if we *listen* to what the Word wants us to do with our wealth, wonderful things will come to us ... including *more* wealth!

But the old wine and its wine skin must go!

Make room for the Master. Invite Him in, then *listen!*

Ask the Word *within* to guide your daily decisions.

Let your soul pray from the closet of your heart.²⁶⁴

Listen!

"Be still and know," your Bible urges.²⁶⁵

It's hard to "receive" when you're busy "transmitting".

Let go of that button on the prayer microphone "self" uses to speak audible prayers out into the world. Pray instead as Jesus taught, from the closet of your heart where only God can hear.

Then, put on your spiritual earphones and *listen!*

God's Voice is not thunder.

It's not even a whisper.

God speaks with gentle "nudges" deep *within* us, almost silent suggestions you "hear" in a new way. You know what He's saying, but He speaks with a Still Small Voice that talks to your soul and not your mind. As time goes by you begin to sense instantly when He speaks, directing you, correcting you, suggesting detours up ahead where decisions must be made.

²⁶⁴ Matthew 6:6

²⁶⁵ Psalm 46:10

The Gospel Mystery

As you heed what He tells you and do what He says, you will find blessings pouring into your life as never before!

Dump your old wine and the wineskin of “self”.

There is New Life ahead!

If “grace” others teach is not “all Grace”, ignore it.

John writes in his 1st letter, “The Spirit you’ve received from Him abides *in* you, so you don’t need men to teach you. His Spirit teaches you *all* things, is Truth, and cannot lie.”²⁶⁶

Listen for His Voice *within*.

Heed His Counsel and be amazingly blessed beyond your wildest dreams.

Your Bible says you’ve not yet seen, heard, or imagined the things God has prepared for those who love Him enough to make room for the Mystery then listen for the Word *within*, the Voice of Him Who loves you most.²⁶⁷

Don’t be deaf to the rooster who calls us all to take a closer look at our secret motives and hidden desires.

If the rooster crows, look in the mirror!

Pride’s purposeful deafness leads to destruction.²⁶⁸

Jesus said, “The Kingdom of God is *within* you.”²⁶⁹ So, if the Kingdom of God is *within* you, there also is His Throne!

Tell “self” to abdicate the throne.

Stop letting “self” rule your life.

If you’re still deaf to His Still Small Voice counseling you from *within*, you’ve probably made a mess of your life so far. You aren’t as happy as you’d like to be, not as

²⁶⁶ 1st John 2:27

²⁶⁷ 1st Corinthians 2:9

²⁶⁸ Proverbs 16:18

²⁶⁹ Luke 17:21

The New Life

successful, not as healthy, and not nearly free of stress and anxiety. If “self” is still sitting on your throne calling the shots, you wish you could change your past, and you aren’t at all sure about your future.

Why wait?

Invite God to *lead* your life from *within*.

Why not?

What do you have to lose?

What secret sin is worth hanging on to? If God changes your desires, so you no longer wish to do the things that hold you back, what can you lose by trusting God’s Voice?

God knows what’s best and wants what’s best for you.

Pray for ears to hear the Word more clearly *within*.²⁷⁰

The Mystery.

²⁷⁰ Luke 14:35

Belief

"Do you believe?" the preacher asks.

The followers reply, "We do."

The preacher pronounces, "Hallelujah! You are saved!"

Later the preacher admonishes, "You must have faith to please God. Do not dance, drink, or smoke cigars. Be good!"

Souls are locked in half-truth doctrines that can *never* save them, burdens difficult to bear.²⁷¹

Some decide to become preachers themselves, and dead doctrines are multiplied. Those whom the Mystery might set free remain trapped in pews, praising their preachers instead of heeding the Word *within* and learning Truth first-hand.

They believe they believe, so they think they are saved.

Do *you* "believe"?

Do you know what that word "believe" *really* means?

Are you certain? Your eternal destiny is riding on what you think that word means when you say, "I believe."

Most people have no idea.

Most people are never told. The word is not explained by preachers, or it is explained incorrectly. Therefore, those who say they "believe" aren't really saying they "believe" in the way your Bible uses that word, the way that leads to life eternal.

They remain in jeopardy because they do not know what your Bible means by "believe".

²⁷¹ Matthew 23:4; Luke 11:46

Belief

Your Bible says, “For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believes* in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”²⁷²

Are you sure you “believe” as your Bible uses the word?

The word “believe” can mean many *different* things.

Job “believed” in God. He “believed” he “believed” better than any of his friends. But, now that you know the “untold story”, you see that he did *not* believe as he should have believed, as your Bible uses the word.

Your Bible tells you devils “believe and tremble”.²⁷³

How *you* “believe” makes a difference!

Job did not have the belief that saves until he heard God speak *within* and saw God with the eye of his spirit.²⁷⁴

Job believed he believed.

Most folks believe they believe.

Churches are filled with people who believe they believe.

But, very few believe the way your Bible uses the word, believing for eternity, believing that changes hearts and saves souls.

Let’s examine the word and its many meanings.

Do you believe in rainbows? You probably do, if you’ve ever seen one. Do you believe rainbows “exist”?

What about the Eiffel Tower in Paris? Do you believe in the Eiffel Tower? Have you ever been to Paris? If not, you’ve probably seen pictures of that strange iron and rivet structure that silently says “France”. Do you believe it “exists”?

Rainbows and towers are things we can see.

²⁷² John 3:16

²⁷³ James 2:19

²⁷⁴ Job 42:5

The Gospel Mystery

You probably believe in rainbows, though you've never been able to touch one, catch its colors in a jar, or find your way to the pot of Irish gold where it ends.

And, you probably believe in the Eiffel Tower, without traveling to Paris. You know it's there. You've seen it on TV, in movies, photographs.

Like the old adage says, "Seeing is believing!"

But, what about things you can't see?

Do you believe in protons, neutrons, and Higgs bosons (the so-called "God particles" physicists claim to have found with their giant particle collider in Switzerland)?

No one has ever "seen" these things and probably never will, yet physicists assure us they exist. Do we *believe* in them? Are they "real". Or are they just theories, mathematical models created to explain an unexplainable universe?

Physicists believe in them.

Do you?

Surely, to *believe* in protons, neutrons, and Higgs bosons is altogether different from believing in sunlight, sandpaper, and shoes ... things we can see, feel, or even wear!

What about Bugs Bunny and Batman?

Those two "exist". At least in our minds. Can we believe in them the same as we believe in a pair of shoes, a pot of stew, or popsicles on a stick?

When it comes to Bugs and Batman, we "believe" in a different way, don't we?

Do you believe in next Tuesday? You put confidence in next Tuesday, make plans for next Tuesday, and trust it will come along right after Monday.

But, does next Tuesday "exist" *today*?

Do you "believe" in next Tuesday?

Belief

How about freedom of the press, racial equality, capital punishment, the right to vote, abortion on demand? Do you “believe” in any of these?

If you believe in any of these, it’s not the same as with rainbows, towers, or sub-atomic particles. You now use the word “believe” *differently!*

When one says, “I believe in capital punishment,” he’s not saying there *exists* such a thing. He says he agrees with the death penalty, the questionable policy of punishing people perpetually beyond possibility of parole.

If one says, “I *don’t* believe in capital punishment,” he is disagreeing with the policy, not claiming it doesn’t “exist”.

The meaning of “I believe” depends on what you think when you say it. It could mean many things, but what counts is what it means in your heart when you say it.

Do you believe in love, honesty, peace?

Most of us do.

Say out loud, “I believe in love.”

Now say, “I believe in Bugs Bunny.”

One word or two?

Same spelling. Different meaning.

When you say, “I believe in love,” you aren’t affirming love “exists”. You’re embracing love as something wonderful, something you value, something you desire to have and share with others.

“Believe” now has an altogether different meaning.

Your Bible says you must “*believe*” to be saved.

What are souls saying when asked by their preacher or priest, “Do you believe?”

Eternity waits for your answer.

What do *you* mean when you say, “I believe”?

The Gospel Mystery

Are you saying “God exists”?

Your Bible says the devils “believe”.²⁷⁵

The devils know God “exists”, but they aren’t getting “saved” by admitting it.

No. Not one bit.

What do *you* mean when you say, “I believe”?

Are you saying something that *connects* with your Creator, something that *embraces* Who and What He Is, something that sees your “self” as you *are* in His Eyes?

We can dig back a few centuries to find the root of this word and discover something quite at odds with how we use the word today.

The *original* meaning derives from ancient Anglo Saxon.

The root of “believe” is *geleafa*.

Geleafa, in the language from which our modern English sprang, is a word that combines two concepts: “permission” and “confidence”.

Geleafa has nothing to do with whether a thing “exists”.

Geleafa is “allowing faith”.

The “permission” part of *geleafa* derives from two more words: “through” (as permeate) and “send” (as missionary). To give permission is to send through, penetrate barriers, push past obstacles.

The “confidence” part of *geleafa* also derives from two words: “with” (as contain) and “faith” (as fidelity). To have confidence is to have “faith with”, to take sides, to oppose a common enemy, to join another in the war against doubt.

When we “geleafa” something (my apology to stuffy etymologists) we give permission to place confidence in it.

²⁷⁵ James 2:19

Belief

We choose to trust.

Belief is a *choice!*

Does that change what you were taught about John 3:16?

To say we “believe” as John means it is to say God has persuaded us to push through the barriers of doubt and place our confidence in His Work.

Belief in God is a doubt-free, hesitation-free decision.

Once the Mystery begins to speak *within*, we are assured by the “down payment” of evidence that God is truly *within* us, and we can say with joy as Paul said, “I live, yet not I.”

When we know Christ lives *within* us, the word “believe” means something altogether different, beyond anything we ever could imagine!

Paul says, “Christ lives *within* me, and the life I live now is by the Faith of Him who loves me and gave His life for me.”²⁷⁶

Paul knew!

The “belief” that saves souls *knows* because it experiences the “down payment” of Christ’s New Life *within!*

Belief comes *before* our confession that is evidence of our soul’s Salvation. Without confession one’s “belief” is void, as explained in the next chapter.

The “belief” that counts is a *decision* based on evidence.

This decision can only be made when God chooses by His Merciful Grace to *give* you Faith by opening your ears to hear the Word *within* you.

The Mystery.

²⁷⁶ Galatians 2:20

Confession

Faith comes by hearing the Word *within*.

Without Faith it is “impossible” to please God.²⁷⁷

You must believe!

But believing is not enough!

Your Bible says, “With the heart a man believes unto righteousness,”²⁷⁸ then adds, “With the mouth *confession* is made unto salvation.”²⁷⁹

Believing alone is not enough to be saved.

We must also confess *with our mouth!*

That’s what your Bible says.

Remember Peter and the rooster? Peter was afraid of the soldiers in that courtyard, terrified of what they’d do to him if they discovered he was one of the disciples.

He denied knowing Jesus. He refused to confess with his mouth, and the rooster crowed as Jesus said it would.

Peter’s pride was shattered, and he heard the Lord’s Voice *within!*

True believers aren’t afraid or ashamed.²⁸⁰

True believers are anxious to confess with joy it is no longer they who live but Christ Who lives *within* them by the Mystery that is guiding and transforming them by His Faith that makes them more loving, more humble, more forgiving, more patient, more understanding, more alive!

The Mystery changes us one confession at-a-time.²⁸¹

²⁷⁷ Hebrews 11:6

²⁷⁸ Romans 10:10

²⁷⁹ Romans 10:10

²⁸⁰ Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Romans 1:16, 5:5, 10:11

²⁸¹ Mark 8:38; Romans 1:16

Confession

There are no boasting believers.²⁸²

Remember Job? His was a child's idea of what it means to "believe". It was not until later he learned what had been "too wonderful" for him, things "he knew not".

Job "believed" when God spoke *within* him, and at once he *confessed* and was saved.

Believing God "exists" or that Jesus "lived and died and rose again" is not enough.

Believing as your Bible says "believe" is not enough.

There must be *confession!*

Confession that saves is not a one-time going forward at a revivalist's tent meeting or ceremoniously repeating words pronounced by a pastor at the front of a public sanctuary.

Confession that saves is not admitting our sins privately to a priest through the veil of a confessional.

Confession that saves is an ongoing everyday event that flows freely from those who truly "believe", admitting it is no longer *you* who live but Christ who lives *within* you, changing you day-by-day according to God's Will and by God's Mercy.

Confession that saves is not ashamed to tell others that the good they see in you is Him, not "self".

Confession that saves is without pride of any kind other than pride in Him who is so Merciful and Kind to us.

Confession that saves has no Pharisaical leaven, because true believers *know* righteousness is God's Work not our own.

Confession does not secure Salvation.

Confession is the evidence of Salvation.

Confessing again and again and again and again ...

²⁸² Romans 3:27

The Gospel Mystery

If you're embarrassed to speak of Jesus in public for fear of how others will react, there's a serious problem.

When you hear the Word *within*, then the seed of Faith is securely sown in your "soul", doubt disappears, belief is born, and confession flows joyfully without restraint, like a river set free from the logjam of fear.

Christ's Faith *within* you pours confession into a world so desperately in need of hearing what the Word is saying!

If you've heard His Voice *within*, you know God is real. You know God wants what's best for you. You know He has begun transforming you and that it's His Work not your own.

If you've heard His Voice *within*, you've started to enjoy life in ways you never imagined, and you see for yourself that the Mystery has been too long hidden from too many.

You pray for others to see.

You tell people, "God is real!"

You ask strangers and friends, "Do you love Jesus?"

The lie of "political correctness" does not dissuade you. There's too much at stake to let His Light be hidden.²⁸³

His Work *within* you is seen by others who ask, "What's new about you? You seem different!"

You confess the difference is His Faith *within* you, the Hope of Glory secured. The Love that Lives Forever pours from your soul like water from a mountain spring, blessing others in whom God may reveal the Mystery.

Once God reveals the Mystery there's no hesitation, fear, or shame confessing that Christ lives *within*, that His Life is making the difference others see, that our wisdom, strength, and beauty result from God's Work *within* us and not from our own doing.

²⁸³ Matthew 5:15; Mark 4:21; Luke 11:33

Confession

True fellowship is enjoyed as we confess with others the “new wine” and “new wineskins” where there’s no room for boasting, no hierarchy or division, no social ladders to climb.

There’s no competition in fellowship. Nobody rules. All are brothers and sisters. God is our Father.

This is the path laid out for you in your Bible.

It’s either all Grace, or it’s not Grace at all.

If God decides to have Mercy, the following will begin:

You will hear the Still Small Voice of the Word speaking to you from *within*, sowing the mustard seed of His Faith²⁸⁴ as you hear what He says.²⁸⁵ It is His Faith that He sows. He is the sower.²⁸⁶ He sows the seed of His Faith *within* us when the Word, the *Logos* who is God speaks *within* you. Then Faith is easy. Then Faith is sweet. Then Faith makes everything new!

You heed His Counsel, instead of listening to “self”, and everything in your life begins changing for the better: health, relationships, success in business, peace.

As you draw nearer by obeying His Voice, so He draws nearer to you. You hear His Voice more often in more places, sometimes telling you to wait or hold your tongue, at other times telling you to go forward and speak. He is nearer than hands and feet. He is *within* you, treasure beyond price, the victory that’s yours by His Mercy and Grace alone.

You tell others because you *want* to, not by boasting but humbly, because you know your new life is not your doing.

It’s *all* Grace, wonderful Grace, amazing Grace!

Your Bible says Faith comes by hearing the Word.

²⁸⁴ Matthew 13:31; Mark 4:31

²⁸⁵ Revelation 22:18-19

²⁸⁶ Mark 4:14

The Gospel Mystery

Your Bible says Salvation comes by confession.

The miraculous irony is that *all* of it flows to us by God's Will and God's Will alone. He plants the seed of His Faith by speaking Himself *within* you. It's all Grace.

Every time we do what the Word says, we soon discover it was the *best* thing we could do, and blessings follow. Every time we don't do what the Word says, disaster follows. We learn to listen. Our ears become eager to hear His Voice, as our soul yearns for more blessings!

We confess because He asks us to. Salvation is secured.

We praise His Work *within*, and the dance that is Eternal Life begins! He gently shows us where we stumble, lifts us up again, and sends us on our way to do His Will by the Mystery that is finally ours.²⁸⁷

Assurance of Salvation is in each confession we make.

We rejoice in confessing the wisdom others see in us is really His Wisdom flowing through us.

We gladly tell our friends and loved ones the good deeds they see us do is His Doing through us.

We refuse to follow ear-scratching doctrines²⁸⁸ that tell us what *we* must do to please God, knowing our very life is Him *within* us, the Mystery that Grace alone allows, the Mercy none of us deserve (else it's not Mercy and Grace not Grace).

“With the heart man *believes* unto Righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation.”²⁸⁹ That's what your Bible says.

His Faith *within* us is made manifest to the world by our confession, the confession that *is* His Faith alive *within* us.

²⁸⁷ John 20:21

²⁸⁸ 2nd Timothy 4:3

²⁸⁹ Romans 10:10

Confession

Remember what Job confessed once he heard the Word *within* himself? “I’ve said things too wonderful for me, things I did not truly know.” God showed Job the emptiness of all he’d learned from books and men’s teachings. God showed Job the fullness of Truth we can learn only by the Word alive *within* us. Job confessed this fact and was saved, the Rock on which Christ laid the Foundation of His Eternal Church.

True Believers proclaim the Mystery in words: books, poems, music, screenplays, cartoons, websites, billboards, skywriting, even graffiti in ghettos.

Always the confession of Grace is the same, though it manifests a million different ways.

It’s *all* Grace!

Any “gospel” that does not confess the Mystery is hell-bound heresy, and any man or woman who cannot freely and honestly confess the Mystery with joy and thanksgiving is not yet saved.

That’s what your Bible says.

The Mystery.

The Invitation

Early Sunday morning in the city park.

A policeman tapped Fred on the feet with a night-stick.

"Time to get up, yer majesty," he ordered.

Fred gathered his newspaper blanket from the park bench and pitched the bundle in a nearby trash can, stretched his arms like the antennae of a nervous insect, stomped the sleep from his legs with a little staccato dance, and walked off along the winding concrete path that led to the heart of town.

- - -

"Oh, my!"

"Only four hours to go," Lydia reminded her gardener, "and so much more to do!"

"Yes, mum," her servant replied. "Will you be wanting flowers in the hall?"

"Oh, dear me, yes!" Lydia answered. "There must be flowers. Daffodils. Tulips. Lilacs. Lots of them! Everything must be perfect!"

"I'll see to it, mum," the gardener assured her.

"Thank you," Lydia absently responded.

"Now, where *is* that window washer?" she mumbled, turning from the gardener as if he weren't there, briskly walking cross the wide expanse of tended lawn.

Brilliant, white furniture dotted the thick green carpet of neatly mown grass.

A large yellow sun hat flapped its brim above her gaunt features as her eyes flashed this way and that, checking each area, noting each need, hunting the servant who must clean the bird baths and scrub the slippery moss from the smooth slate paving stones of the northern walkway.

The Invitation

Hoops and stakes were placed for croquet with strict precision. Near them an umbrellaed cart held brightly colored balls and mallets.

All was ready.

"Two o'clock!"

"Dear me!"

"They will all be here by two o'clock, and so much more to do!"

A small man walked up behind her, a huge ladder balanced on his right shoulder, a giant bucket hanging from his left hand. "Have you been looking for me, Miss Apple?"

"Yes, yes! The baths are a disgrace, the northern walk is treacherous, and I'm late for church."

She stared down at him, "You really must see to these things, Perkins. They'll be here in just four hours. *We must* be ready."

"Will there be anything else, ma'am?"

"No, no. That should keep you busy until I get back."

"Yes ma'am," the little man obediently replied.

Each turned from the other. Lydia hurried toward the garages. The little man deftly swung his ladder round and walked off like a tiny picnic ant beneath his massive burden.

- - -

Lydia shifted nervously in her pew.

Her pew!

She always sat there. Her family used that pew for years. Now her husband gone and children grown, she sat alone in her traditional spot (fifth from the left, right-hand side, three rows back) all by herself.

The Gospel Mystery

It irritated her that such a man would be admitted to that sacred building, much less that ushers would seat him next to her.

The very idea!

- - -

"Excuse me, ma'am. Is this space taken?" Fred asked.

Lydia smiled an unconvincing smile as Fred sat down, glancing uncomfortably around that hallowed sanctuary.

The organist's fingers danced the keyboards as the giant golden pipes sang forth the intricate fugues and heavenly harmonies that lured Fred in from the lonely, noise-scorched streets outside.

Now he sat enraptured as the music carried him away from his everyday reality.

Fred's soul rose above the rags he sat in.

Lydia sat frozen in a silent forward stare.

Fred didn't mind. He came to hear the melodies and counter-melodies, singing spirits side-by-side, lifting him nearer his God.

- - -

"Our Lord and Heavenly Father, ..."

Silence hushed the room as the preacher began.

Heads bowed.

Awkwardly, Fred looked down at his gnarled fingers, broken nails, and knuckles scarred from long-forgotten barroom battles.

"We beseech Thee our God, by the Grace of Thy Promises, that Thou would bless this hour to Thy Glory, to the strengthening of Thy Spirit within us, and to the Honor of Thy Son, our Savior and Eternal Hope."

"Perhaps he'll leave," Lydia thought hopefully.

The Invitation

"Now's my chance," Fred thought, hoping to sneak out before the plate was passed or the sermon could begin.

"Number three-hundred-thirty-seven," the preacher's friendly voice resounded.

"Will you stand?"

Fred glanced furtively to his left as a young couple with two small children filled the pew on that side.

Lydia's floppy yellow hat blocked him on the right.

He felt a hand on his shoulder as an elderly gentleman in the pew behind handed him an open hymnal with a kind and encouraging smile.

"Our faith looks up to Thee," they sang together, "Thou Lamb of Calvary."

Fred remembered singing that hymn beside his mother many long years ago when he was just a child.

"Savior Divine."

Fred's eyes followed the stained-glass windows, each a portrait of some Bible hero he had long forgotten. There was Abraham and Isaac on a mountain top. Moses by the Burning Bush. Young Jesus teaching in the temple. The Risen Christ walking a rocky hillside path on bare pierced feet.

"Since Adam's fall," the preacher began, "our Heavenly Father has yearned for us to love Him. He is waiting now for souls to surrender pride and begin a new life by receiving the Mystery of Christ *within*."

Fred stared at the holes made by hateful nails.

"The Bible tells us God seeks entry into our hearts," the preacher continued.

"Behold,' He says, 'I stand at the door and knock.'"

Fred's heart skipped a beat.

"Will you ask Him into your heart today?"

The Gospel Mystery

Clouds moved through the beams of sunlight piercing the stained-glass picture of the nail-pierced Jesus, causing colors to fade and return again with radiance and reality. The sacred scene began to come alive. The mournful eyes looked down on Fred, scars no longer leaden chips of glass but real wounds through hands and feet of flesh.

Fred stared.

"Jesus wept," the minister continued.

Fred's eyes filled with tears.

"A man of sorrows, your Bible says. He was without sin and innocent of any crime, yet betrayed, imprisoned, beaten, spat upon, and nailed to an old wooden cross where He was left to die alone."

Fred reflected on his own lonely life.

"Drunken soldiers gambled for his clothing while He hung helpless from those cruel nails."

Fred shuddered as the memory of drunken days shot through him with a sense of shame.

"At last the breath of life escaped, and Jesus died."

Fred searched for the soul of that stained-glass image.

Wonder touched his heart.

"His body was placed in a borrowed tomb, sealed by a giant stone, carefully watched by soldiers day and night."

The preaching penetrated Fred's thoughts.

"Within lay a lifeless body."

An icy chill touched Fred's heart.

Lydia's face hid under the floppy brim of her yellow hat.

"But God!" the preacher shouted with joy.

Fred looked up to the pulpit.

The Invitation

"By the Mercy wherewith He loves us, God reached into that silent tomb and breathed life once more into the body of Our Christ."

Fred's eyes riveted on the preacher.

"Jesus arose victorious, conquering death through Love!"

Fred squirmed.

The preacher's eyes, soft as the eyes in the stained-glass window, powerful as the prints of the nails, looked on Fred as he gently whispered, "For you."

Silence.

Then, the preacher's glances moved on.

"How long will you struggle with your burden of guilt?
How long will you walk life's path alone?"

Fred's eyes wandered to the golden candlesticks, the arch of shiny golden organ pipes, the polished railing and kneeling bench below the choir loft.

"Wouldn't you like to be free?"

Fred's gnarled fingers gripped the hymnal on his lap.

"Have you a friend as true as Jesus?"

A strange new feeling touched Fred with wonder. Icy fingers of fear reached into his soul, seeking to silence the preacher's words, trying to turn his heart to stone.

"Ask Jesus into your life today!"

Fred heard these words as if a different voice had spoken them *within* himself, as if he were the only one who heard the words, as if they were spoken for him and him alone.

"Ask God to forgive, and eternal joy will be yours from this day forward."

Like a massive cargo broken free in the hold of a storm-tossed ship, something old and heavy broke free within Fred.

The Gospel Mystery

"Before our Savior ascended to Heaven, He assured us with these words, 'Let not your hearts be troubled. I go to prepare a place for you, that where I Am you shall be also.'"

Fred wondered like a child what sort of place it might be.

"Do you believe in Jesus?"

Fred's lips said silently, "I do".

"Come forward and confess before the people here that you believe, and God will honor His Promise of abundant life both now and forever."

Fred's legs twitched. His feet shuffled. He squirmed in the pew. His heart pounded.

Lydia, hiding her eyes beneath her floppy yellow hat, stared down at the ragged trousers and old scuffed shoes.

Fred looked up at the preacher's robe, the hand-rubbed pews, the stained-glass windows, the towering organ pipes.

"Come forward as we stand and sing together number two-hundred-thirty-three."

Lydia's yellow hat faced rigidly forward.

The organist played, the people stood, and all began to sing "Just As I Am".

Fred stood, sidled to his left, smiled as he edged past the two small children, bowed to the young mother, said "Excuse me," to the man on the end, paused a moment as he stepped into the aisle, then turned and walked toward the preacher's welcoming smile.

The music stopped, and the preacher asked, "Do you believe in your heart that Jesus died to purchase forgiveness of your sins and has prepared a place for us who believe in Him to live eternally when our struggles here are through?"

"I truly do," Fred answered softly.

The Invitation

A tear of joy made a path down Lydia's powdered face.
The Mystery.

God's Name

Though God has had many names in many cultures and religions throughout recorded time, God specifically directed Moses to tell the Jews to know Him by only One Name.

God wants all generations to call Him by One Name.²⁹⁰

The Name He gave Moses.

The Name is a single word in Hebrew, spelled with those four strange-looking letters you saw earlier in our little book:

י ה ו ה ׳

“Yod Heh Vah He”

Churches teach He is “I Am”.

He Is.

But, He is so much *more!*

He is ineffable, a word that means unknowable, beyond imagination, impenetrable, inscrutable.

He is omnipresent, a word that means He’s everywhere.

He is omniscient, a word that means He knows all there is to know.

He is omnipotent, a word that means He holds all power in his Hands.

Yet, God is so much *more!*

God wishes to live *in* you and *through* you!

Perhaps the greatest failure of modern “churchianity” is in its pretending to know what cannot be known. Teaching

²⁹⁰ Exodus 3:15

God's Name

followers to look no farther than short-sighted scriptural interpretations and devious denominational doctrines.²⁹¹

Jesus showed the people this conceited failure of the ruling Jewish priesthood. That's why the priests plotted to have Him murdered by the Romans, so they could hide this ugly truth about themselves and continue duping the people into believing that priests know all there is to know of God.

Paul predicted we would see this spiritual pretention in our present time.²⁹²

No one knows all there is to know of God.

Break out of men's mold and search the deeper things of God that come only by the revelation of His Presence *within* you. Only then can you know Him better. Only then can you dance that intimate dance with Him that He desires.²⁹³

Pulpit preaching and Bible study are good, but they are far from all you need. To be transformed, God must renew the mind *within* you,²⁹⁴ so you may know the deeper things of God²⁹⁵ that are revealed only by His Spirit *within* us, teaching our souls the deeper things, revealing more truth day-by-day, bit by bit, precept upon precept, line upon line²⁹⁶.

Each morning He shows more of Who He Is.²⁹⁷

Throughout the day He gives us insights into life, the needs of others, the ways our lives could be much better.

And, as we close our eyes at night, He takes us through a world of dreams to teach us even while we sleep.

²⁹¹ Mark 7:13

²⁹² 2nd Timothy 4:3

²⁹³ Psalm 150:4

²⁹⁴ Romans 12:2

²⁹⁵ 1st Corinthians 2:10

²⁹⁶ Isaiah 28:10; 2nd Corinthians 4:16

²⁹⁷ Psalms 143:8

The Gospel Mystery

We never stop learning, growing in wisdom each day, being transformed into the image of Christ by the witness of His Spirit *within* us.²⁹⁸

Daily drawing nearer to who Christ wishes to be *in* us.

That's why Philadelphians ask, "Who is Christ in you?"

If we think we know God and His Mystery already, then we know nothing as we ought to know.²⁹⁹ We have stopped our ears from hearing the Word who *is* God.

We know in part.³⁰⁰

God is *beyond* our knowing fully ... at least in the short space of a single lifetime.

We can discern certain things about His Character by what we learn of Jesus in our Bibles and by Christ's Spirit sent to be God's witness in our hearts, but in this life we cannot completely comprehend the One Who Is Forever.

Our life is far too short to learn what we may know when eternity tolls. We see God only partially as through a window stained by traditions of culture, limitations of our many languages, and our human tendency to see things only as we wish them to be and not as they really are.

We can see more clearly through our stained window by meditating on God's Name. To call upon His Name. To say His Name out loud until the window of our soul opens wider and we *hear* Him speak His Name *within* us!

"I Am!"

God's English Name is "I Am", past, present, forever.³⁰¹

"I Am" is God's Name in many cultures and religions, where different languages say essentially the same as we do in English when we say, "I Am." God is the same to

²⁹⁸ Romans 12:2

²⁹⁹ 1st Corinthians 8:2

³⁰⁰ 1st Corinthians 13:9-12

³⁰¹ Exodus 3:13-15.

God's Name

millions as the Holy One Who Is, Always Was, and Evermore Shall Be. They may have different words in their different languages, but the meaning is the same, their God is the same.

In English the best we can say is “I Am”.

The Name we are commanded to keep holy.³⁰²

The Name we should never use in vain.³⁰³

God's Name in English is “I Am”.³⁰⁴

God's Name is not “God”.

God told Moses from the burning bush, “I Am.”

“I Am” is all that is, ever was, and ever will be.

“I Am” is everything real, without limit in time or space.

“I Am” is the universe in which we move and exist.³⁰⁵

But, “I Am” is much more than the universe.

“I Am” is Creator, for by His Word all things exist and operate according to His Will: the shining stars, the growing corn, your silly laughter.

“I Am” is Sustainer, for by His Word your heart beats, rivers flow, and life perpetuates through generations.

“I Am” is also Destroyer, for by His Word we die, leaves of autumn fall, and someday the elements themselves will melt with a fervent heat.³⁰⁶

“I Am” is serious.

“I Am” is now and forever.

“I Am” is tangible and intangible.

³⁰² Leviticus 22:32; Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2

³⁰³ Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11; Psalms 139:20; Proverbs 30:9

³⁰⁴ Exodus 3:13-15.

³⁰⁵ Acts 17:28

³⁰⁶ 2nd Peter 3:10-12

The Gospel Mystery

“I Am” is conscious of Himself and all within Him.

“I Am” creates this drama that He may enjoy the play.

He knows every thought that flits through your mind.

He sees everything you look at.

He hears everything you say.

There is nothing that isn't “I Am”, with the exception of “nothing”, for *only* “nothing” is not “I Am”.

It's the non-existent “nothing” that causes our troubles!

Just as light is never darkness, and darkness never light, so God is *never* “nothing”, and “nothing” is *never* God.

Yet, “nothing” causes our troubles, because our minds can “create” what does not exist. We imagine “nothings”. We believe in them. We behave as if they exist, and the lies take us away from God who is Truth. More on this later.

Your Bible says, “God is light, in whom there is no shadow of turning.”³⁰⁷

God is everywhere.³⁰⁸ Scientists now tell us there is light even in the seeming absolute darkness of outer space. Light is pervading everywhere, even where we cannot see it. God is Light.

There is only *one* God.

God is One.

A popular song says, “Our God is an awesome God,” as if there were another, as if “our” God is only one of many.

In fact, there is no other, so the lyrics should say, “Our God is awesome!”

God has many names in many languages and cultures, yet God in all those languages and cultures is the same God, the One who is and ever was and ever shall be. He alone is

³⁰⁷ James 1:17

³⁰⁸ Psalm 139

God's Name

the God of all, regardless of the Name by which different people use to call on Him.

God seeks whom He may save by the Merciful Grace of his indwelling presence *known to us by His Name alone!*³⁰⁹

God commanded Moses to tell the children of Israel that His Name is “I Am” and that He was to be remembered by all generations as “I Am”.

Yet, most refer to God as “God”.

His Name is not “God”.

God's Name is a treasure awaiting your discovery.

In God's Name we begin to see into our souls.

In God's Name we begin to receive wisdom.

In God's Name we learn we are *nothing* apart from Him. We learn this not by pulpit preaching nor Bible reading, but by calling on Him by His Name.

This may seem strange, yet we urge you to speak to God by His Name. Call on “I Am” while He may be found.³¹⁰

The third Commandment tells us there's a blessing for those who will keep God's Name “holy”. Your Bible says God will not hold him guiltless who uses His Name in vain!³¹¹

Lest you think this means speaking profanity when we hit our thumbs with a hammer, drop a dish on the kitchen floor, or want to be part of the gang when you hang out with others who curse, please read on!

Know the truth that sets men free. Know what your Bible says about keeping God's Name “holy”.

What does it mean to be “holy”? What is holiness?

³⁰⁹ John 17:26

³¹⁰ Isaiah 55:6

³¹¹ Exodus 20:7

The Gospel Mystery

When Moses climbed that mountain where he found the burning bush, God commanded the old man to remove his shoes, because he was standing on “holy ground”.³¹²

What does the word “holy” really mean?

Dictionaries tell us anything “holy” is set apart for God, like the ground where Moses stood that day.

Like your Holy Bible.

Like the Holy Sacrament of Bread and Wine. Bread for the hunger in your soul to know Christ and His Suffering in an intimate way, not to fuel your physical body with ordinary nourishment. Wine is to cleanse your heart by Godly Sorrow, triggering true repentance, not to quench physical thirst. The Bread and Wine are “holy”, set apart for God alone.

“Holy” is from the same root as “hallowed” in the first sentence of the Lord’s Prayer, “Hallowed be thy Name.”³¹³ To “hallow” something, therefore, is to keep it “holy”.

To hallow God’s Name is to keep His Name holy.

To hallow God’s Name is to use it for Him alone.

How often have you prayed the Lord’s Prayer without realizing what you were saying in that first sentence?

“Hallowed be Thy Name.”

God told Moses from the burning bush, “Draw not here. Put off your shoes. Where you stand is holy ground.”³¹⁴

Do you use God’s Name for God alone?

Holy things, like God’s Name, are for no other purpose. They are to be “set apart”. They are for God, to God and not for us or to us.

³¹² Ezekiel 3:5

³¹³ Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2

³¹⁴ Exodus 3:5.

God's Name

They are not for vanity, to be used in vain. A vain person is one whose focus is on “self”. Vanity is conceit. Vanity puts “self” in center ring. Anything “taken in vain”, therefore, is robbed of holiness, set apart for self, honoring the creature instead of the creator.

Few realize the true meaning of that first sentence of the Prayer Jesus taught us, so they do not “hallow” God’s Name. They use God’s Name for “self” instead. We all do this until we are old enough to begin bridling our tongues, taking care with what we say and think, using words with respect.

God is the Word.

God spoke the worlds into existence.³¹⁵

Words matter.

Words like “holy” and “hallowed” matter.

We ignore them at our peril.

We are commanded not to use God’s Name in vain.

We are to use God’s Name for God alone, not “self”.

God’s Name is not *your* name, mine, or anyone else’s.

God’s Name is God’s Holy Name.

There are blessings for those who keep the Name *Holy*.

There are curses for those who do not.³¹⁶

Using “I am” for “self” takes God’s name in vain. It breaks the Third Commandment.³¹⁷ Vanity, not holiness, is the result, honoring “self” instead of God. The first sentence of the Lord’s Prayer, “Hallowed be thy Name,” becomes a lie on our lips, because we do not “hallow” God’s Name when we use “I am” for “self”.

³¹⁵ Genesis 1

³¹⁶ Exodus 20:7

³¹⁷ Deuteronomy 5:11; Proverbs 30:9

The Gospel Mystery

Examine the Bible verses cited by our notes and see. In your Bible you'll find writers saying, "Here am I," instead of "Here I am." What we write to you is true. It will bless you, if you obey the truth and keep God's Name holy.

Know what the words "holy" and "vain" mean before you use them again.

God's Name is for speaking to God in worship.

God's Name is for speaking to Christ *within* you.

Remember our question, "Who is Christ in *you*?"

He *is* "I Am"!

You aren't.

To obey the Third Commandment, you need to let God put His Mind in you, and that's *exactly* what will happen when you obey the Commandment to keep His Name Holy!

This may seem strange. Perhaps no one has ever told you these things. But, we want you to be blessed by the truth that is clearly stated in your Bible, even if it's not much preached from today's pulpits. Good things come to those who obey.

You will be blessed as you "hallow" God's Name.

You will be blessed as you no longer use it in "vain".

God will reveal Himself *within* you.

The Mystery is Eternal Life *within* you.

You are not "I Am".

Are you ready to discover deeper things of God?³¹⁸

Stop saying "I am" in reference to yourself.

This will be a struggle at first, but that's just the point.

Wrestle with your ego.

³¹⁸ 1st Corinthians 2:10

God's Name

Call on God as “I Am”, and God will appear *within* you!

Don't say “I am” for “self”. Say, “Here am I,” like the men who wrote your Bible.

Bridle your tongue, and see what happens!

As you keep the Third Commandment, the Mystery will begin speaking *within* you with His Still Small Voice. You will find God rejoicing that you've come in search of Him at last.

We cheat ourselves by believing men's traditions, stifling God's Perfect Plan for us, all because we do not seek Him where He wants to be, *within* us!

We Philadelphians know Christ lives *within* us. He talks with us and walks with us. He tells us we belong to Him, and it is His doing, not ours. All we do is what He allows by His Mercy, the Amazing Grace that transforms us gradually into His Own Image ... according to His Will.

If we refuse to see ourselves as we are and God as God, how can we hope to be transformed into His Image?³¹⁹

We must stop wanting God to be what *we* want, an entity *outside* ourselves whose name is “God” and not “I Am”.

We must stop thinking God is our co-pilot, conveniently staying out of our business until we call on Him to meet our needs when the going gets tough.

We must stop imagining God is “up there somewhere”, unable to search the secret chambers of “self” where we hide our vain imaginings.³²⁰

It's one thing to believe what we're told about God when we are young, trusting those more “educated”, higher situated on the social ladder, but as we mature we should find out for ourselves.³²¹

³¹⁹ Romans 8:29; 2nd Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 3:10

³²⁰ Psalm 2:1; Acts 4:25

³²¹ 1st John 2:27

The Gospel Mystery

“Surely,” as children we said, “God must be what my Sunday school teacher [or rabbi or priest or pastor or other religious leader] taught – an all-powerful, all-knowing being who lives somewhere far above us.” As children we were taught thunder is “God moving furniture in Heaven.” We were told the Kingdom of God is some faraway place.³²²

So, we stuff God neatly in the narrow box of traditional children’s understanding and never reach beyond the limits of our early religious training. We dare not question comfortable doctrines of teachers and preachers we believe are wiser than ourselves. So, we miss the intimate relationship God desires to have with us, the reason He created us in the first place.

We miss having Him closer than hands and feet.

We miss hearing His Voice speaking to our souls.

We miss being transformed by renewed minds.³²³

“Just a closer walk with thee,” the old hymn sings. “Grant it Jesus, if you please.”

If you want a “closer walk” with God, honor His Name.

He wants not to walk beside you or behind you or above you, but *inside* you.

He wants to clothe your soul in His Righteousness, His Wisdom, His Strength, His Beauty.

We rely on teachers and preachers to tell us what our Bible says, because we’re too lazy to read for ourselves and “rightly divide”³²⁴ what it says, discovering the deeper things of God. We watch TV, read newspapers, go to movies, and occasionally sit in church to hear what someone else has to say about our Bible, but few of us

³²² Luke 17:21

³²³ Titus 3:5; Romans 12:2

³²⁴ 2nd Timothy 2:15

God's Name

search the scriptures, as Jesus commanded us to do so we might find Him *within* us!³²⁵

Search, while you still have time!³²⁶

Don't trust your soul's destiny to another man's say-so. Strike out on your own. Go ahead and read that big, thick book you call your Bible. Get away from denominations that believe what they wish to believe. Don't follow traditions of men.³²⁷

Question everything, and Truth will prevail.

To trust what others say, thinking by their great number and professed authority that they have perfect understanding, is like following Scribes and Pharisees whom Jesus warns us are poisonous snakes.³²⁸ They dress in fancy robes and speak with flowing words, but within, as Jesus said, they are tombs whitewashed on the outside but full of dead men's bones.³²⁹

Fools choose teachers³³⁰ to teach them what they want to know. It is disaster and death to their souls.

The deep things of God await your unbiased search.

Read your Bible.³³¹

Then, decide for yourself what is true. Tired traditions of men and their dozens of competing denomination doctrines, or the Mystery our little book describes?

³²⁵ John 5:39

³²⁶ Psalms 90:10; Isaiah 55:6

³²⁷ Mathew 15:16, Mark 7:8-9, Mark 7:13, Colossians 2:8; 1st Peter 1:18

³²⁸ Matthew 3:7, 12:34, 23:33; Luke 3:7

³²⁹ Matthew 23:27

³³⁰ 2nd Timothy 4:3

³³¹ Exodus 3:13-15

The Gospel Mystery

It may seem foolish to say, “I Am,” only in reference to God and never of yourself, yet your Bible says, “God has made foolish the wisdom of this world.”³³²

“The wisdom of this world *is* foolishness with God.”³³³

The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”³³⁴

Take responsibility for your soul’s eternal destiny.

Seek God, while you may yet find Him.³³⁵

Only Truth is true. Nothing else is.

God is all that is, all that ever was, all that ever will be.

God created us. Not we ourselves.³³⁶

God alone decides when we are born, what we look like, what our future holds in store, and when we die.

We aren’t captains of our soul nor masters of our fate.

We are *created* beings alive by the Grace of God alone! To teach anything else is blasphemy. To follow doctrines of men and be deceived by “the leaven of Pharisees” is rank rebellion against God and rejection of the Gospel!

Say God’s Name to Him.

Then you will find Him *within you!*

God is I Am!

Not you, not me, not us.

We examine our universe with the tools of science and mathematics, proudly proclaiming we “understand”, when all we really have are ever-changing theories even Einstein told us may be overturned at any moment.

³³² 1st Corinthians 1:20

³³³ 1st Corinthians 3:19

³³⁴ Psalm 14:1; Psalm 53:1

³³⁵ Job 23:3, Acts 17:27

³³⁶ Psalm 100:3

God's Name

We say we know “how” magnets attract, “how” our sun gives off light, “how” babies begin life when two microscopic cells join together in their mother’s womb, but not one of us knows “why”.

We interact with the universe outside us, our car, our clothing, our golf clubs, boats, wives and children, friends and neighbors. We look outward for reality, like astronomers peering through telescopes to explore a star-speckled sea of space surrounding us in all directions, yet *within* is the greatest Mystery of all!

But seldom do we look *inside* to see “self” basking in ego.

We are “I am” to ourselves. It’s what we’ve always been. It’s how we think of “self”.

We say, “I am honest,” or “I am getting sleepy.” Or, as French philosopher Rene Descartes proclaimed, we say “I think, therefore I am.”

And someday death will teach us we are not.

God is.

“Self” dances in its darkness, denying vanity and pride.

Meanwhile, God waits to be “I Am” *within* us.

We insist on being “I am”, until the rooster crows.

Then by Amazing Grace, God may let our soul see the Truth (as He did for Job at the end of his trials³³⁷) and know God as “I Am”.

Truth is not illusion.

You are not “I Am”.

Start today to hallow His Name *within* you, using those two words for Him and not yourself.

Or, disobey the Third Commandment, make a mockery of the Lord’s Prayer, turn away from God’s Perfect Path and

³³⁷ Job 42:5

The Gospel Mystery

be persuaded by popular opinion, fooled by children's fables, and detoured onto the wide highway of men's traditions that lead to absolute and eternal destruction.³³⁸

Honor God by keeping "I Am" holy.

Make your soul a habitat for His Indwelling Spirit.

Let God teach your soul who Christ can be *within* you!

We know the world around us doesn't obey but, as your Bible clearly tell us, the world does not know God at all!³³⁹

Christ is not of this world.³⁴⁰

God makes foolish the wisdom of this world.³⁴¹

The world is filled with spiritual wickedness.³⁴²

Decide from this moment to pray *within* the "closet" of your soul³⁴³ in secret to "I Am", using His Name.

And, if God decides to grant you Mercy, He will answer by His Still Small Voice *within* you.³⁴⁴ You'll experience God in a new way, intimately as never before, new wine in a new wineskin.³⁴⁵ You will begin to learn who Christ is *within* you.

You will be changed.

As you honor God's Name in this new way, you will stop wanting to be praised for what you are and for the things you have achieved in life. You will *know* it has been all by Grace!

³³⁸ Matthew 7:13

³³⁹ John 1:10

³⁴⁰ John 8:23

³⁴¹ 1st Corinthians 1:20

³⁴² Ephesians 6:12

³⁴³ Matthew 6:6

³⁴⁴ James 1:5

³⁴⁵ Matthew 9:17

God's Name

We all start out as the center of our universe. If you have children of your own, you know this is true. Yet, we are not the center of the universe, nor are we “I Am”.

We put “self” at the center of our being and God outside us, “up there somewhere”. There’s room for only one on the throne of our soul. It can be “self”, as it was with Job before he discovered the truth of “self” *within*. Or the center of our universe can be “I Am”, center-stage, in control, counseling our soul, guiding us, loving us, teaching us all truth in a way no man or woman or book can teach.

Keeping God’s Name holy (not using it vainly for “self”) fixes our biggest problem: Pride.

Try, and you’ll see what our little book says is true, but you’ll never know until you try.

Hallow God’s Name, and be transformed.

Hallow God’s Name, and God will transform you from *within*, teaching you all things by His Spirit who cannot lie.

Hallow God’s Name, and He will show you His Perfect Plan for your life³⁴⁶ and guide you by the counsel of His Still Small Voice *within* you.

Hallow God’s Name, and His Faith will begin to clothe your soul with Christ’s Spirit.³⁴⁷

Draw nearer to Him, and He will draw nearer to you.³⁴⁸

You will find the victory that overcomes all obstacles, even death itself!³⁴⁹ You will know you’re not a “self-made” person after all. You will know you are God-made, and you will be glad. You will know you are not “I Am”, and that will change everything! You will worship God with holiness, and God will bless you for it. You will gladly

³⁴⁶ Romans 12:2-3

³⁴⁷ Romans 13:14; Galatians 3:27

³⁴⁸ James 4:8

³⁴⁹ 1st Corinthians 15:54-55

The Gospel Mystery

relinquish the throne of “self”, joyfully welcoming Christ to be the center of your life as Lord and dearest friend.

You will fail again and again, but each time you hear His Voice kindly asking you to look deep within yourself to see why you failed, you will learn truth as never before.

In time it will become second nature.

You’ll learn new ways to say things as you awkwardly juggle sentences to avoid taking His Name in vain. You’ll see your “self” clinging tenaciously to its demand to be “I am”, and your soul will wish to be changed!

Pride demands to be heard. Let God silence your pride.

Jesus suffered to be nailed to an old Cross so you and I would hear the rooster crow, experience the shame your Bible calls “Godly Sorrow”, repent in truth and not in word only, and invite Him to have first place with our soul and save us from the death that waits for all who insist on being “I am”, instead of yearning for God’s work of transformation that makes us more like Christ as He begins to dwell *within* us.³⁵⁰

Jesus died so He may live *within* us by the Mystery.

God in Christ and Christ in us so we may be one, put away our pride, stop our fighting, and see world peace in our lifetime.³⁵¹

All things are possible when God is *within* us!

The Mystery.

³⁵⁰ Hebrews 5:12-14

³⁵¹ John 17:23

The Enemy

We have an enemy.

Our enemy has many voices, but none is still or small. Our enemy's voices are shrill, frightening, shaming, blaming, accusing. None speaks Truth with Love as God speaks.

Our enemy's voices are evil spirits, tempting us, taunting us, terrifying us, tricking us into taking detours away from the narrow path that leads to life eternal.

The lying spirits always lie. They often wrap their lies in a bit of truth to trick you into trusting, but the truth they say is always stained by hidden falsehood to decoy us into darkness.

They say, "Because of your sin there is no hope for you." The truth is that we sin. The lie is that there is no hope.

They say, "You're tired. You ought to take a nap instead of working on that project." The truth may be we are tired. The lie is that a nap will help us when we lose our job or get bad grades and fail."

They say, "You're poor. You ought to cheat on taxes." We may be struggling financially, but to cheat on taxes won't be good for us in the long run.

Lying spirits seek our failure.

All your life they convinced you to make bad decisions, choices that seemed good at the time but resulted in failure. Wrong friends, wrong food, wrong habits, wrong attitudes, wrong behavior. Disaster followed.

"It's ok to have another cocktail before driving home. It won't kill you."

"Other men cheat on their wives. You should, too. Life is short. Have some fun!"

"Jupiter is in Capricorn tomorrow, a perfect day for you to close that deal with Jones."

The Gospel Mystery

“Just open your Bible to a random page to see what God wants to say to you today.”

People listen!

The father of lying spirits is called satan in your Bible. He is personified, as if he had the human form we foolishly celebrate at Halloween, dressed in red tights, with pitchfork, pointed tail, and horns. In fact, satan *is* darkness, though he appears as a spirit of light, sometimes beautiful to behold, melodic to hear, even dangerously desirable.

He may come in the form of a sensual woman inviting men to forbidden pleasures. He may come in the form of a bottle of gin that soon becomes another and another. He may come in the form of an offer to work for a crooked company that sells defective or dangerous products. He may come in the form of a second piece of pie.

Always he comes to destroy you.³⁵²

English “satan” in Hebrew means “adversary of truth”.

English “devil” in Hebrew means “false accuser”.

Lying spirits. Voices in our heads speaking half-truths. Opposing us. Accusing us. Deceiving us. Always attempting to lead us from the Truth.

When you see “satan” in your Bible substitute “adversary of truth”. When you see “devil” substitute “false accuser”.

When we allow “self” to listen to satan’s temptations, we open the door for our adversary to work evil *within* us. When we are deceived by accusations of devils, truth is displaced by empty, dangerous lies we foolishly choose to believe.

The consequence is always the same. Disaster.

Sooner or later (if we don’t call on God by His Name and receive Christ *within*) the lies destroy us completely.

³⁵² 1st Peter 5:8

The Enemy

Darkness leads to death.

The dead men I saw lying in New York's Bowery gutters sixty years ago never imagined they'd end up cold, stiff, alone, and ignored by people walking past them on a busy city street.

Some of those corpses once had jobs, a loving mother, healthy bodies, and hope for a brighter future. But, the lying spirits convinced them, "One little drink won't kill you."

Some truth. All lie.

Until we learn the truth revealed by God's Name *within* us, we are ignorant of our enemy's devices and vulnerable to our enemy's tricks. We make bad choices, and failure to make better choices brings ruin on ourselves and those we love.

We are engaged in a war of competing spiritual forces seeking to control human behavior and determine the destiny of men and nations.

On one hand is Truth who is, was, and always shall be.

On the other hand is deception, tempting us from Truth.

By keeping God's Name holy, hallowing "I Am", we are made strong to resist the pretender's lies, no longer victims of the avarice and pride of "self" that wants to be "I am".

Only truth is true and lasts forever.

The devils' disguises are just masks in a fools' parade. Their voices don't love you, won't lead you on the path to peace and life eternal. In the long run, if you let them, they will murder your soul.

Learn to recognize the Voice of "I Am".

"I Am" points us to what's good, honest, and loving.

"I Am" wants what's best for us.

The Gospel Mystery

See through the sometimes beautiful disguises of deceit. Anything that's not *completely* true is *false*. Anything that isn't *light* is *darkness*.

Only Light can drive darkness from our lives, while the darkness cannot dispel the tiniest glimmer of light.

Darkness runs from Light but cannot restrain itself from entering where Light is removed. Turn off the light in your bedroom at night, and darkness floods in to fill each empty space Light leaves behind. Turn on the light again, and darkness flees!

So it is with satan and the lying demon spirits. When we think we are "I am", the light is off, and darkness rushes in.

When we hallow God's Name by speaking "I Am" to Him *within* us His Light dispels the darkness, telling satan and the demons to take a hike!

Your Bible says, "Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."³⁵³

Don't attempt this alone! Resist the devil by giving God first place, by inviting God to be "I Am" and not using His Name for "self".

Darkness will tell you this is nonsense, and if you will not try there will be no Light. You will remain in darkness, having your ears scratched by doctrines that fluff your feathers with the assurance that you're saved by *their* doctrine.³⁵⁴

God is not mocked.

Whatsoever we sow, that also we must reap.³⁵⁵

³⁵³ James 4:7

³⁵⁴ 2nd Timothy 4:3

³⁵⁵ Galatians 6:7

The Enemy

Your Bible says rebellion is like witchcraft, stubbornness is iniquity, and by refusing to honor the Word (who *is* “I Am” and not a book) we cause God to reject us.³⁵⁶

By keeping “I Am” holy, instead of using it for “self”, your whole being will be filled with light. But, if you use “I Am” for “self”, refusing to acknowledge Him for who He is, you will be filled with darkness and, as Jesus says, “If the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”³⁵⁷

Open the way for God to fill you with Himself, for God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.³⁵⁸

Let God be “I Am” in you and *see!*

God is in Christ, and Christ will be *within* you when you invite Him to be “I Am”.

The Mystery indeed has been hidden.

An old preacher used to say, “There’s only one God, and you’re not Him.”

Each moment we choose.

Who is “I Am”?

The Mystery.

³⁵⁶ 1st Samuel 15:23

³⁵⁷ Matthew 6:23

³⁵⁸ 1st John 1:15

Spirit

Words are spirits.

People are souls.

You are a soul. You're *not* a spirit.

You *have* a spirit.

When you become a living soul at birth, your spirit gives your body life, the “mystic breath”, the delicate force that lets you move and think and see, the spirit who tells you each day you are “I am”.

This is “self” whom Christ will replace with His Spirit, if God grants His Mercy.

“Self” is a spirit.

“You” are a soul who will live forever, either in the Light of God or in the outer darkness alone.³⁵⁹

God’s Spirit of Truth is in Christ.³⁶⁰

We pray Christ may be *within* you, displacing “self”!

God’s Spirit formed your body from nothing, gave you your eternal soul, and breathed the “self” spirit of life into your nostrils so you could be a living soul and make a choice.

Adam was a living soul once God put spirit in him.³⁶¹

Like Adam, you are a soul, not a spirit.

These are two different words, like apples and oranges.

You *have* a spirit (sometimes call “ghost” in your Bible).

You *are* a soul.

³⁵⁹ Matthew 25:30

³⁶⁰ John 17:23

³⁶¹ Genesis 2:7; 1st Corinthians 15:45

Spirit

You *have* a spirit, “self” doomed by death and therefore desperate to live life to the fullest, no matter who it hurts.

Your “self” spirit has but a short time to live.

Your soul will live forever.

Your “self” spirit demands attention. Your “self” spirit gets angry when it cannot have its way. Your “self” spirit wants to be admired, appreciated, applauded.

When you “give up the ghost”, your “self” spirit leaves, and your body dies. Abraham gave up his ghost and died “in a good old age”.³⁶² Ishmael gave up his ghost and died.³⁶³ So did Isaac³⁶⁴, Ananias³⁶⁵, and Herod.³⁶⁶

Jesus, too, gave up His ghost³⁶⁷, and His Body died. Your Bible says Jesus commended His Spirit unto God,³⁶⁸ and God now puts His Spirit *within* us who are saved.

Jesus’ Soul and Spirit live forever. God’s Perfect Plan.

Your soul also lives forever, is eternal, is *you!*

Your soul is not “self”, not a “spirit”.

You *are* your soul.

Your soul is *you!*

If you think your soul is your “self” you are in danger.

If you think you are a spirit and follow other spirits, God will set His Face against you.³⁶⁹

We ask by our little book whether you (your soul) will be eternally embraced by the Spirit of “I Am”, who *is* forever, or whether you (your soul) will allow “self” to rule until

³⁶² Genesis 25:8

³⁶³ Genesis 25:17

³⁶⁴ Genesis 35:29

³⁶⁵ Acts 5:5

³⁶⁶ Acts 12:23

³⁶⁷ Mark 15:37;

³⁶⁸ Luke 23:46

³⁶⁹ Leviticus 20:6

The Gospel Mystery

“self” expires with your body, leaving you (your soul) to wander unclothed and alone in outer darkness forever.

If you think soul and spirit are the same, you haven’t read your Bible.

Your Bible says, “The Word is sharper than any sword, able to divide soul from spirit.”³⁷⁰ If two things can be cut apart, separated by division, they surely cannot be the same.

There is spirit. There is soul.

Which are you? Soul or spirit?

You can’t be both!

Eternal soul or temporary spirit?

According to your Bible, we are souls who *have* a spirit

You (your soul) has been and always will be alive.

Your “self”, however, is but a ghost, a temporary spirit that has only *this* time to be on parade, to puff itself up³⁷¹, to imagine vanity against the truth.³⁷²

Avoid false doctrines and lopsided theologies that teach you *are* a “spirit” and *have* a “soul”. That doctrine is backward and *not* what your Bible teaches.

Jesus warns, “What will you profit to gain everything in this lifetime and lose your soul?”

Your soul is as God created you to be, to have hopes, aspirations, and desire for pleasure in life. Your soul desires life. Your soul desires pleasure. False doctrines teach you it is wrong to desire pleasure, but God made you as you are so you would desire Him. He waits for us to hear the rooster call us away from “self” and into His Loving Arms, to run like a child to our Protector, for our immortal

³⁷⁰ Hebrews 4:12

³⁷¹ 1st Corinthians 4:6-5:2; Colossians 2:18

³⁷² 1st Samuel 12:21; Psalm 2:1; Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 2:18

Spirit

souls to be clothed by His Spirit and dwell with Him forever.

There is nothing evil in the soul's desires. The problem comes when "self" gets in the way, listening to other spirits, then our soul listens to "self", and "self" convinces soul to heed and follow spirits that lie against the truth.

God created our souls weak, so He can make us strong.

We need God's Spirit of Truth to replace "self" and the lying spirits "self" brings to its impermanent parade.

Many trust lies of religionists who present themselves as prophets, pastors, priests pretending to know "more about God" because they attended seminary or studied books.

But, until a man has heard the rooster call him to see the truth *within* and begins to hear the Still Small Voice *within*, teaching him Truth by Christ's Spirit, he knows nothing as he ought to know.³⁷³

Jesus urges us to have no fear of that which can take our spirit away (i.e., kill our body) but to fear only what can cast our souls into hell.³⁷⁴

Pray to hear God's Still Small Voice *within* you.

Hear the Word who *is* God. Hear Him *within* you.

God's Spirit of Truth teaches us all things,³⁷⁵ speaking to our souls that will never die.

"I Am" is the author and finisher of Faith.³⁷⁶

"I Am" *within* you by His Grace.

The Mystery.

³⁷³ 1st Corinthians 8:2

³⁷⁴ Matthew 10:28

³⁷⁵ 1st John 2:20

³⁷⁶ Hebrews 12:2

Perfection

You *can* be perfect.

Were it not so, Jesus would not command, “Be perfect, as God your Father in Heaven is Perfect.”³⁷⁷

Remember, the Kingdom of Heaven is *within* you.³⁷⁸

You *can* be perfect if Father God is *within* you as “I Am”, instead of “self” demanding the throne as “I am”.

Call Him while He may yet be found *within*.³⁷⁹

Call, “I Am”, and by exceeding great good fortune He may hear you and answer with His Still Small Voice that will lead you to safety in this life and Salvation beyond.

So much of what we are and what we finally become is in our words, what we say and how we say it. Your Bible says a perfect man controls his speech.³⁸⁰ Then in the same passage, your Bible says we cannot control our speech.³⁸¹

Yet, Jesus says, “Be perfect.”

How can this be? He would not ask us to do an impossible thing? What is going on here?

You cannot control your speech. But, “I Am” *can!*

If He is *within* you.

He will tell you what is best to say by saying it *within* you, *before* you speak, if you wait just a bit and listen, *before* blurting out your every thought.

He will suggest to you words by which He wishes to bless, encourage, and show gratitude to others, the witness to others of Himself *in* you.

³⁷⁷ Matthew 5:48

³⁷⁸ Luke 17:21

³⁷⁹ Isaiah 55:6

³⁸⁰ James 3:2

³⁸¹ James 3:8

Perfection

If you *listen*.

He will politely nudge your thoughts before you speak your mind in anger. You'll then have a choice. His words or your own.

You can let "self" speak what the lying demons have to say, or you can speak what God urges you to say, instead.

If you wish to miss the blessings that can be yours by the Grace of His Presence *within*, you can ignore His Counsel, let "self" be your god, and imprison your soul forever in outer darkness all alone once death sucks that last breath from your temporary body.

The choice is always ours, else Grace is not Grace.

If we hear "I Am" *within* and obey, we are blessed.

If we hear and rebel, we curse ourselves.

If you wish God to choose you as one of His elect,³⁸² to speak *within* you with His Still Small Voice, then pray without ceasing, fervently, constantly.³⁸³

If you are *being* saved, *being* transformed by the Grace of His Presence *within* you, then rejoice for your Salvation is near at hand, soon to be completed!³⁸⁴

God will bridle your tongue,³⁸⁵ if you let Him.

He will control what you say when you listen to what He is saying before you speak.

By giving God control, you put on Christ.³⁸⁶ By giving God control, you begin to be transformed by the renewing of your mind so you may show what is that good and perfect Will of God *within* you!³⁸⁷ By Giving God control, you

³⁸² Romans 8:33, 9:11, 11:5-7

³⁸³ 1st Thessalonians 5:17

³⁸⁴ Romans 13:11

³⁸⁵ Philippians 2:13

³⁸⁶ Romans 13:14; Galatians 3:27

³⁸⁷ Romans 12:2

The Gospel Mystery

soon discover you can trust that He is the potter and we but clay. His Presence *within* you will brighten the world around you.

As you trust it is He who has begun this Work in you, you will experience the “earnest of your Salvation” and know He will complete the Work of transforming you perfectly into the image of Christ.³⁸⁸

This is His Plan for you ... to make you perfect!

Perfection begins as we give Him control of our tongue.

When you find the Grand Architect of the Universe alive *within* you, giving you a daily choice between life and death, joy and sorrow, victory and defeat, you will choose the more excellent way, and God will do the Work of perfecting you.

Not by struggling to be perfect, as you’ve been taught all these years, but by choosing to hear and say what God’s Still Small Voice *within* you is saying.

Jesus said it’s not what goes into a man that ruins him but what comes out of his mouth that defiles his soul.³⁸⁹

Do you hear Christ’s Spirit *within* you before you speak?

Do you listen to the words that come out of your mouth and compare them with what Christ is saying *within* you?

Do you stop to listen for His Voice before you speak?

We make this choice until we die. Then choosing ends.

Whom will we serve: selfish “self” or the Lord of Love?

With “I Am” *all* things are possible.³⁹⁰

Even perfection by His Merciful Grace.

³⁸⁸ Philippians 1:6

³⁸⁹ Mark 7:18-23.

³⁹⁰ Philippians 4:13

Perfection

So long as we think “self” is “I am”, foolishly thinking we are masters of our fate, perfection is not possible.

We can’t perfect ourselves.

We must be born again by the Spirit of Christ *within* us, speaking Truth to us with His Still Small Voice.

We listen, obey,³⁹¹ and do not lie.

We are made perfect.³⁹²

There is no lie in perfection. We cannot joke around and later say, “I was only kidding.” Your Bible warns, “Let no corrupt communication come out of your mouth.”³⁹³

You cannot say to your spouse, who rarely washes the dishes after dinner, “You *never* wash dishes,” because it’s not *perfectly* true.

You cannot say to your spouse, who only buys you flowers for Valentine’s Day, “You *never* bring me flowers,” because it’s not *perfectly* true

If you want to be transformed into the image of Christ, you must speak the Truth that Christ speaks *within* you.

No lie is of God, not even the little white ones. Lies are fiery darts of satan, father of lies.³⁹⁴ Those who let un-truth escape their lips serve satan, not God, however innocent they think their lies to be.

A young boy at church was standing next to the pastor, who unwittingly patted the boy on the head and said to one of the deacons, “Billy is a little devil.” He then turned to the boy, “Aren’t you Billy?”

The boy nodded sheepishly.

³⁹¹ Romans 10:10

³⁹² John 17:23; 2nd Corinthians 12:9; Galatians 3:3; Hebrews 12:23

³⁹³ Ephesians 4:29

³⁹⁴ John 8:44

The Gospel Mystery

Who but God will know what damage those false words did to that little child's soul? Perhaps the pastor meant no harm, but that fiery dart of satan found its mark in a little boy's heart. Billy wasn't encouraged or lifted up. What if his father berates him, too? "You'll never amount to anything!" Who but God will know the harm those words caused, the greatness Billy missed because his dad discouraged him, and his pastor told him he was a devil?

God's Still Small Voice *within* prompts us to encourage, edify, and lift our brothers and sisters, spouses and children, the trampled masses in search of love and hope. God wishes to do this work *in* you, for you to wish to do His pleasure.³⁹⁵

Listen for "I Am" to speak *within* you, the *indwelling* Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth who cannot lie.

All things are possible when Love dwells *within* us³⁹⁶ and we listen to what He says!

We'll be called to answer for every word we speak.³⁹⁷ The path to perfection is not littered with lies, white or otherwise.

As we surrender our tongue to "I Am" *within*, our mind submits to the dominion of His Holy Spirit, your whole body is filled with Light, and God's will is done *within* you (not "up there" somewhere).

Our tongue may be a little member, but it controls great things.³⁹⁸ As we submit our tongues to the counsel of Truth, God's power flows through us to others. God's power, the Love of Christ, Faith that comes by hearing the Word *within*. Power purchased by Blood, sealed by Suffering, and revealed to us by a rooster's crow.

³⁹⁵ Philippians 2:13

³⁹⁶ Matthew 19:26

³⁹⁷ Matthew 12:36

³⁹⁸ James 3:1-11.

Perfection

Take a moment now and listen for the Still Small Voice.

Close your eyes and hear with your soul *within*.

Listen for “I Am” who isn’t “self”.

Be still and know.³⁹⁹

The Mystery!

³⁹⁹ Psalm 46:10

Power

Your Bible says the Law came by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus the Christ of God.⁴⁰⁰

Jesus died on a cross so you could know True Love. He suffered so you can receive the Power of His Spirit *within* you, so you may be healed, transformed, and perfected.

It is His Life *within* us that does this work. It is His Life *within* us that never dies, life eternal. It is by His Life *within* us that we can escape the wrath of God's judgment.

Nothing else can save us.

Christ's life *within* us is the Truth that sets us free.⁴⁰¹

There is no love apart from Christ and His Sacrifice for us. Those who are incapable of loving Jesus are incapable of loving anyone (even themselves).

Nothing but the love of Christ *within* can protect us from our adversary, for we have no power over evil apart from the Power of Christ's Spirit *within*.

His Life *within* us is Truth.

His Truth *within* us is Victory.

His Victory *within* us is Love.

His Love *within* us is Wisdom.

His Wisdom *within* us is Beauty.

The Mystery of the Gospel, our only hope of glory!⁴⁰²

Many great men in times past imparted wisdom through their writings, but only One Man offers Power to change our souls *within*.

Changed we must be to inherit eternal life.

⁴⁰⁰ John 1:17

⁴⁰¹ John 8:32

⁴⁰² Romans 5:2; Ephesians 1:18; Colossians 1:27

Power

Changed we must be to fully enjoy this life on earth.

Religions challenge us to change ourselves. This is true of Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists, even Sikhs and other faiths. All teach some form of self-sacrifice, some even to the extreme of suicide for the promise of paradise.

This denies the Power we need to be changed *within*.⁴⁰³

Religions impose restraint from without. The Mystery offers Power *within*.

Religions urge adherents to submit to various versions of “truth” by threat of ostracism or excommunication. Their followers are enslaved by commandments they must keep by force of will, *an impossible task*. The followers of such religions are not free. They are slaves to those who rule them by deeds God hates.⁴⁰⁴

Only “I Am” in Christ and Christ *within* us brings Power of Truth to transform us *internally*. Only His Spirit *within* can motivate us to do and be what’s best for us and those around us in the world. Only His Faith *within* can overcome the evil power of the godless world outside us.

Many miss this Truth because they’re taught children’s views of God. The Mystery remains hidden. To truly receive the Grace of Christ and His Work *within*, that Saving Faith we need to live forever, we must embrace the Mystery, listen for Christ’s Voice to guide us and counsel us. We must confess His Presence *within* us is our only power, wisdom, strength, and beauty.

Too many adults retain their Sunday school view of God “somewhere up there” looking down on them from heaven. What they need is to find Him as He wishes to be found, to discover and be changed by “I Am” in Christ *within*.⁴⁰⁵ Then they will celebrate *with* Him the transforming of their

⁴⁰³ 2nd Timothy 3:5

⁴⁰⁴ Revelation 2:6 and 2:15

⁴⁰⁵ John 17:23

The Gospel Mystery

minds by a Power they do not possess, the Power of Christ's Love *within* them by Grace, exceeding great good fortune!

We cannot save ourselves!

Jesus said, "Consider the lilies. They do not toil. They do not work at weavers' wheels to spin cloth. Yet King Solomon in all his glory wore nothing so fine as the flowers you see."⁴⁰⁶

Jesus asked, "Who among you can make yourself taller by thinking about it?"⁴⁰⁷ He asks, "Who among you can make one hair on your head white by merely taking thought?"⁴⁰⁸

It can't be done!

"If the Lord builds not the house, the workmen labor in vain."⁴⁰⁹

"If the Lord doesn't protect the city walls, the watchmen watch in vain."⁴¹⁰

We cannot make ourselves good. It is God who works in us both to will to do good and to do it.⁴¹¹

We ask and, by exceedingly great good fortune, God may have Mercy and save us by coming to live *within* us.

This Mystery has been hidden by competitions for power and preeminence that have corrupted church leadership more than twenty centuries.⁴¹²

Jesus taught the Mystery. So did Paul, James, Peter, and John. Apart from the Mystery there is no real power. Apart from the Mystery there is no lasting victory.

⁴⁰⁶ Matthew 6:28.

⁴⁰⁷ Luke 12:25.

⁴⁰⁸ Matthew 5:36

⁴⁰⁹ Psalm 127:1

⁴¹⁰ Psalm 127:1

⁴¹¹ Philippians 2:13

⁴¹² 3rd James 1:9

Power

When the life-changing Power of Christ's Love *within* us is omitted from a doctrine, that doctrine is heresy, ignoring the truth that alone can set us free. The Power to overcome the enemy of our souls is His Power, the Power that defeated death and walked from an empty tomb.

As we agree, the Mystery makes us one.

As we agree, the Mystery excludes pride and boasting.

As we agree, the Mystery brings us together to sit in His Holy Presence as sons and brothers.⁴¹³

As we agree, the Mystery unites His Church at last.

The Mystery.

⁴¹³ Ephesians 2:6

The Foundation

“No foundation can any man lay than that which is laid by Christ Jesus.”⁴¹⁴

Men in a Sunday school class for seniors were discussing changes they’d seen in churches over their lifetimes. They saw new programs and new music and wondered, “Are we doing all we should?”

We are *not* doing all we should.

Jesus said, “If I be lifted up, I will draw *everyone* to me.”

Is everyone drawn to Christ? No?

Then we are *not* doing all we should.

We aren’t lifting Jesus as we should.

Baby Christians (of whatever chronological age)⁴¹⁵ are told this statement refers to Jesus being “lifted up” on the Cross for the world to see his suffering. And, this is one of the ways we can understand what Jesus said.

It could also mean when He was “lifted up” from death in that cold tomb where His Body was laid after he died on the Cross.

Or, it could mean when he was “lifted up” to sit at the right hand of God at the time of His Ascension.⁴¹⁶

Yet there’s another meaning that challenges us.

Are *we* lifting Jesus up?

And, are we lifting Him as He desires to be lifted?

A man remarked as he and his wife were introduced by a friend, “I love my Sally.” The dear lady stood obediently by her husband in an inexpensive gingham dress that looked as though she’d worn it scrubbing floors for years.

⁴¹⁴ 1st Corinthians 3:11

⁴¹⁵ 1st Corinthians 3:1

⁴¹⁶ Mark 16:19

The Foundation

Her bare feet were stuffed in a pair of rubber soled sandals through which bulged blue-black traces of overworked varicose veins. She wore no jewelry but a thin gold wedding band. Her hair was tied in a knot. She spoke not a word, made no gesture as her husband talked, looked only at him with vacant eyes too long denied the joy of laughter.

His shoes were shiny. His freshly-pressed trousers were crisply creased. His clean white shirt was tailored (not one of those off-the-shelf styles one finds in department stores). His nails were finely manicured. His jacket lapel proudly displayed a fraternity pin, and on his right hand was a heavy gold class ring marking him as a man of social distinction entitling him to the various social honors of this world.

Is the Church like this man?

It's time we asked, "If the commercial church is lifting Him as He desires, why is not *everyone* drawn?"

He said *everyone* would be drawn if He were "lifted up", and *everyone* is certainly not being drawn to Him.

What are we missing?

Could it be the Mystery?

If human hearts are "deceitful above all things", as your Bible says,⁴¹⁷ is it not possible the hearts of our commercial churches are deceitful, hiding truths God wishes us to learn, failing to lift Jesus so *everyone* will be drawn to Him?

Is the commercial church built on the right foundation?

When a sea-going ship is built, the first step is to lay the keel on the shipwright's floor. This is the vessel's backbone. More than any other part of the ship, the keel will give it the strength it needs to pound its way through thousands of blue ocean miles. The keel is laid first, then the rest of the ship is attached by bolts and rivets, piece by

⁴¹⁷ Jeremiah 17:9

The Gospel Mystery

piece, until the whistle and bell are finally attached. Then the ship is ready for duty.

First the keel is laid.

The safety of souls at sea depends on the soundness of the vessel's structure, and its structure depends on its keel, the ship's foundation. All in proper order.⁴¹⁸

“No greater foundation can be laid than that which is already laid, God's Spirit Christ and Christ alone.”⁴¹⁹

Is the commercial church built on Christ alone, or is its foundation something else, hiding the Mystery?⁴²⁰

What does the world see?

Are commercial churches using *all* available resources to lift Jesus, or are they distracted by other things?⁴²¹

Is the Mystery secondary to temporal projects, funding tax-exempt corporate bank accounts, putting more tithing people in pews to pay employees, presenting entertainments in place of prayer and sacraments, scratching itching ears with palliative preaching that won't offend wealthy patrons whose generosity pays the church salaries?⁴²²

Is the commercial church (like the well-dressed man and his wife Sally) telling the world it loves Jesus, while polishing its padded pews, building taller steeples, and playing modern music to attract a bigger paying crowd?

Too harsh?

Maybe not when you ask, “Why isn't *everyone* drawn?”

He said, “If I be lifted up I will draw *everyone* to me.”

⁴¹⁸ 1st Corinthians 14:40

⁴¹⁹ 1st Corinthians 3:11

⁴²⁰ 1st Corinthians 3:10

⁴²¹ Luke 10:42

⁴²² 2nd Timothy 4:3

The Foundation

The conclusion is obvious.

Something is amiss!

Is the need for more income to keep the corporations afloat financially interfering with putting *all* church resources to the task of lifting Jesus higher?

Like restaurants on “the strip” there’s a denomination to appeal to the tastes of every potential customer. Some allow cigars, dancing, short skirts, cocktails or an occasional beer. Others take pride in being “above” all that sort of thing. One may choose which church to attend and which not to attend based on what a church “believes”, as people choose where to eat based on who has the best French fries or soup.

There’s a “church” out there for everyone, so “self” can choose one that won’t try to transform him.

Where’s the Church for Christ, the One He purchased with His Blood on that old Cross?

Jesus says, “If I be lifted up I will draw *everyone* to me.”

If *everyone* is not being drawn, it is because commercial churches are like selfish husbands seeking honor for “self”, while the Bride stands silently by in shabby clothing.

Corporate churches ignore the most excellent thing.⁴²³

So, *everyone* is not yet being drawn to Christ!

There’s an old hymn, “The church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ the Lord.”

When a ship is constructed, the deck isn’t built first. The sides aren’t erected then the bottom put on. The smokestack isn’t hung from rafters and the ship built under it. That is not doing things decently and in order.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ Luke 10:42

⁴²⁴ 1st Corinthians 14:40

The Gospel Mystery

When a ship is built, the keel is laid first, then every last detail of the ship is added to that first, fixed, and fundamental foundation that gives the entire vessel its strength.

Are church corporations building financial castles in the air without first laying the firm foundation that is “Christ in us, the Hope of Glory”, the most excellent thing?⁴²⁵

Your Bible says, “Let judgment begin in the church.”⁴²⁶

Is a rooster crowing *within* the commercial church?

Is the Spirit of Christ their corporate CEO?

Does Jesus have first place?

The Mystery.

⁴²⁵ Luke 10:42

⁴²⁶ 1st Peter 4:17

The Salt

Jesus says, “I have called you to be salt, preserving my world from corruption [salt is used to preserve food] but if you have no saltiness, how will corruption be prevented?”⁴²⁷

Commercial churches do what they can to reach the lost as individuals, but they do nothing to be salt in the world. As far as their understanding goes, they teach the fundamentals of the Gospel but only to individuals, not nations. They say they change the world by winning souls “one at-a-time”, but no effort is made to win nations.

It’s illegal for them to try!

Today’s corporate churches throw their salt away when they apply for tax-exempt status with the IRS. They are, after all, businesses with employees and expenses like department stores and restaurants. Without money they must close. They survive on donations.

So, they encourage supporters to give by offering what amounts to a small discount that for most people amounts to no more than 15% at tax time.

An average tax payer (15% bracket) who puts \$100 in the passing plate does *not* reduce his tax by \$100!

He saves only \$15 at the bottom line.

He can claim a \$100 donation on his tax return, but that amount comes off “above the line” as tax accountants say. It only reduces the amount of “income” to be taxed.

By reducing his income by \$100 he pays \$15 less in tax.

His donation costs him \$85, instead of \$100.

Look what it costs Christ’s Church Mission to “be salt” in the world.

⁴²⁷ Matthew 5:13

The Gospel Mystery

The IRS application church corporations sign “under penalties of perjury” promises the corporation will not use its assets (1) to promote the candidacy of individuals to public office or (2) attempt to influence government legislation.

If the corporation does either of these things, it loses its “tax exempt” status, and donors would have to pay the full \$100 to give the corporation \$100. In some cases (since the corporate officers signed the IRS application “under penalties of perjury”) failure to obey the law could result in jail terms.

In more than 70 years of attending church, not once has this been explained from a pulpit. Even donors in the highest tax brackets save no more than about 35% and, of course, the majority of attendees who support the corporations are at or near poverty level so the \$100 they give results in no discount at all.

It might interest you to know that the “tax exemption” has nothing to do with any other aspect of church finances. Churches are exempt from property tax, and church leaders enjoy special tax loopholes whether or not a “tax exemption” is applied for. The only purpose for the exemption is giving donors a tiny incentive to give more!

The love of money is the root of all evil.⁴²⁸

Throughout your Bible we are told God cares for nations as well as individuals and wishes the nations to be saved, too!

The word “nation” appears in your Bible 670 times! In particular, God seeks to save the nation of Israel.⁴²⁹

Jesus asks, “If your salt loses its savor, what will there be to preserve the world.”⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸ 1st Timothy 6:10

⁴²⁹ Romans 11

⁴³⁰ Matthew 5:13

The Salt

Yet, corporate churches sell their birthright like Esau⁴³¹ by taking an oath not to use any part of their assets (1) to promote individual candidates to public office or (2) attempt to influence government legislation by lobbying or otherwise.

So, every sort of interest, every kind of issue (other than the interests and issues relevant to Christ's Mission to a lost world) are permitted to organize, lobby legislatures, support individuals running for office, and buy media advertising to promote their cause, while the corporate church for the sole purpose of encouraging its supporters to give more money, hides The Light of the World ... His Light!⁴³²

And people wonder why the world is going to hell, why nations are losing their way, why societies are crumbling?

Paul warns of doctrines in the last days "Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof."⁴³³

The power of godliness is the Mystery of Christ *within*, power that gets involved, power that challenges evil rule in high places, power that pulls down strongholds!

Paul tells us not to follow those who have the form of godliness but lack the power.

Paul warns us, "Turn away!"⁴³⁴

Jesus wants us to salt the world with fire!⁴³⁵

Where is the commercial church's fiery salt?

When will church leaders abandon corporate structure, get out of the business of raising money, and lift Jesus for all the world to see by fighting the battle of Light v Darkness

⁴³¹ Genesis 25:31-34

⁴³² Matthew 5:15; Mark 4:21; Luke 11:33

⁴³³ 2nd Timothy 3:5

⁴³⁴ 2nd Timothy 3:5

⁴³⁵ Mark 9:49-50

The Gospel Mystery

in every arena where the battle of competing ideas is being fought today?

Christ's Mission is not for individuals alone but to bring Peace on Earth by changing nations, challenging evil in high places in government, as He did and paid the price.

It's time for the corporate churches to be rid of the evil, deceitful IRS temptation, tell the people the truth about how much money it saves them on their taxes, and take the battle for morality and the Principles of Christ to the courts and the legislatures and the voting booths!

Turn over the money-changers' tables!

Jesus did it.⁴³⁶

Why shouldn't we?⁴³⁷

Let the battle for world peace begin today by abandoning tax-exemption restraints and pulling down strongholds of evil in government, as fearless, courageous, loving Jesus did.⁴³⁸

Let churches organize as trusts, instead of corporations. They can do more as trusts than they can do as corporations limited by IRS restrictions and the necessity of filing detailed corporate reports of their activities. See a sample trust online at

www.TheGospelMystery.com/PhiladelphiaTrust.pdf

Let Christ's Church participate in political debate!

Toss some fiery salt of Christian Values on the floor of the United States Senate and House of Representatives!

Toss some salt in state and local government, the courts, town councils, county commissions, school boards!

⁴³⁶ Matthew 21:12; Mark 11:15; John 2:15

⁴³⁷ John 17:11

⁴³⁸ 2nd Corinthians 10:4

The Salt

Stop the decline of national morality by promoting the candidacy of wiser men and women to public office!

Get outside the walls of your cloistered sanctuaries!

“Go into all the world,” Jesus commands us!⁴³⁹

“Be salt!”

Lip service from pulpits claiming to put Jesus first, while putting other things first, is like pride of that selfish husband with his shiny shoes, fancy suit, and gold lapel pin, standing next to his bride in her old faded dress.

Commercial churches need to get out of commerce.

Christ’s Church is not a “business”!

Paul admonished the Romans, “Let all of you admit your faults. Declare that God alone is true, and you will overcome when attacked by your adversary.”⁴⁴⁰

Let commercial churches cast aside every weight that so easily besets them,⁴⁴¹ the money, debts incurred for buildings, social climbing ladders, worldly prestige, and press on for the high calling⁴⁴² to be revealed when He alone is lifted up.⁴⁴³

Repentance begins when the rooster’s crow alerts us to the darkness *within* us, triggering Godly Sorrow *within* us.

Pray the rooster’s call be heard by commercial churches.

Pray they come out from hiding in their tax-exemptions, take a stand on that firmest foundation who is Christ *within*, put *everything* else aside, and get actively involved in the battle for Peace!

Pray the commercial churches get salty!

⁴³⁹ Mark 16:15

⁴⁴⁰ Romans 3:4

⁴⁴¹ Hebrews 12:1

⁴⁴² Philippians 3:14

⁴⁴³ Hebrews 12:1

The Gospel Mystery

The Power for Peace awaits.

The Mystery.

The Rock

Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do men say I am?”⁴⁴⁴

They answered according to what they’d heard others say that He was one of the old prophets back from the dead.

“But, who do *you* say I am?” He asked.

Peter answered, “You are the Christ of God.”⁴⁴⁵

Then Jesus laid the keel for the ship that is His Church.

“Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you. My Father in heaven has revealed it *within* you, and on *this* I will build my church!”⁴⁴⁶

Many believe He meant to build His Church on Peter, a mere man. No. No. No!

He meant He would build His Church on the Mystery!

The Word spoke to Peter *within*.

God revealed to Peter who Jesus is *within*.

Peter didn’t know the truth from reading a book, hearing a sermon, or trusting the teachings of any priest, pastor, pope, or newspaper reporter.

Peter learned the truth by direct revelation from God.

Peter is not the truth, nor is he the Church’s Foundation!

Within minutes after laying His Church’s foundation, He told Peter, “Get behind me, Satan. You’re offensive to me, for you desire not the things of God, but those of men.”⁴⁴⁷

Clearly that man is *not* the foundation of Christ’s Church.

The Word revealed to Peter who Jesus is.

⁴⁴⁴ Matthew 6:13, Mark 8:27,

⁴⁴⁵ Matthew 16:16

⁴⁴⁶ Matthew 16:17

⁴⁴⁷ Matthew 16:23

The Gospel Mystery

The Word who is “I Am” and speaks *within* us today.

The Word who sows the seed of Faith *within* us when we hear His Still Small Voice *within*, as Peter did that day.

Faith comes by hearing the Word *within!*

The Mystery.

Conclusion

The foundation of Christ's Church is the Word *within* us by the Grace and Mercy of Almighty God alone!

The Wisdom this world has not yet known.⁴⁴⁸

The Wisdom commercial churches have not yet taught.

The Spirit of Christ *within* us lifting Jesus higher!

The Spirit of Christ *within* churches free at last.

Free from the chains of financial interest.

Free to proclaim the Mystery to both nations and those individuals who control the destiny of nations in the offices of government.

Free to change the world!

Free to promote World Peace!

The world will not remain forever blind to this Truth.

The Rock of His Church is the Mystery, not Peter or any other man who claims authority to rule the laity by apostolic succession from that old fisherman.

The Rock is Christ *within* us, the Word flesh and blood cannot reveal, the Spirit of Truth who teaches us all things!

This truth was known to Peter and also to Paul, James, John, Jude, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and many writers of the Old Testament who foresaw the Mystery to come by Christ's Spirit *within* us. The Mystery was revealed to them the same way it is revealed to us, by Grace and Grace alone.

Christ sets us free from the priestly rule God hates.⁴⁴⁹

He alone is our High Priest.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁸ John 14:17

⁴⁴⁹ Revelation 2:15

⁴⁵⁰ Hebrews 2:17, 4:14-15, 9:11

The Gospel Mystery

The only lasting truth is what God teaches us *within*.⁴⁵¹

“These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you,” John writes. “The anointing you received of Him is *within* you, and ye need not any man to teach you. The anointing teaches you all things, is truth, and is no lie.”⁴⁵²

The Mystery of Christ *within* us!

The Mystery revealing truth to us.

The Mystery lifting Jesus at last for all the world to see!

The Mystery that will someday make us One People.

The Mystery that *is* His Church.

Some are beginning to see this truth, and soon the world will be united in peace by the Power of the Mystery.

God *within* us, transforming us, filling us with wisdom, giving us new desires, new hope.

The Mystery will soon unite the world in peace.

The Mystery of Him who *is* Love alive *within* us!

Paul said, “I purposed to know nothing among you but Jesus and Him crucified.”⁴⁵³

Souls aren’t saved by doctrines or theories of theology.⁴⁵⁴

Souls are saved by the Spirit of the murdered Lamb who *is* the Word; by the Still Small Voice speaking *within* us of the Love who was crucified, dead, and buried; and by the Blood that shames us with Godly Sorrow to work true Repentance.

There is no other Gospel.

⁴⁵¹ 1st John 2:20

⁴⁵² 1st John 2:26-27

⁴⁵³ 1st Corinthians 2:2

⁴⁵⁴ Colossians 2:18

Conclusion

Jesus said, “None can come to “I Am” except by me.”⁴⁵⁵

He is the Rock of His Church, alive and working *within* us who are saved, by God’s Mercy and Grace that is either *all* Grace or not Grace at all!

This is what He died for.

The Purpose of the Gospel is to unite the entire world of souls who will *know* by hearing the Still Small Voice, the Word who *is* God, the Christ Spirit speaking *within* them, assuring them He *is* alive, that He is *real!*

They will *know* because they hear His Voice *within* them, guiding them, changing them, teaching them Truth as no man or book can ever do.

Bringing peace on earth at last by the Revelation received by Christ’s Eternal Spirit of Truth and Love *within*⁴⁵⁶ us all.

God in Christ and Christ in each and every one of us!

Free to love each other now and for forever.

The Greatest Mystery.

⁴⁵⁵ John 6:65

⁴⁵⁶ Matthew 5:9; James 3:18

Postscript

“Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Amen.”

Jude 1:24-25

Postscript

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Philadelphia Trust
c/o Dr. Frederick D. Graves, Trustee
Stuart, Florida
866-529-3279 ... (Jurisdictionary®)

trustees@philadelphiamissions.com

Please email us and pray for our ministry.

Thank you.

The Gospel Mystery