

preaching according to mystery

Romans 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

- and the preaching of Jesus Christ
- according to the revelation of the mystery

The Preaching of Jesus Christ

There are three (3) basic ways to preach Christ:

1. According to prophecy
2. According to mystery
3. A combination of both prophecy and mystery

Preaching According to Prophecy

As presented in chapter titled "preaching according to prophecy", Paul opens up **Romans 1:1**... Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

- separated unto the gospel of God
- Which he had promised afore by his prophets
- in the holy scriptures

The foundation of Paul's preaching was based on Old Testament scripture, because the argument of who Christ claimed to be, is founded upon the Old Testament. Even the elements of what Paul refers to as 'my gospel', are founded upon OT passages or events in the lives of two OT saints, Abraham and David.

Acts 9:19-20 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. 20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

- And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God

Acts 9:27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

- how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus

Acts 17:1-3 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

- three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures
- Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead
- and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ

Acts 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

- they received the word with all readiness of mind
- and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so

Acts 18:4-5 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. 5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

- he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath
- testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ

Acts 19:8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

- he went into the synagogue
- disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God

Acts 26:6-8 And now I stand and am judged for the hope made of God unto our fathers: 7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. 8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

- now I stand and am judged for the hope made of God unto our fathers
- Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

Acts 26:22-23 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: 23 That Christ should suffer, and that he

should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

- witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come
- That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people and to the Gentiles

Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

- to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God
- persuading them concerning Jesus
- both out of the law of Moses
- and out of the prophets, from morning till evening

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

- I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received
- how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures
- And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day
- according to the scriptures

Romans 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

- For what saith the scripture?

Romans 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

- Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man

Preaching According to Mystery

Paul's Preaching - Not Theirs

Since it has been demonstrated that Paul relied on OT scripture, throughout his ministry, it begs the question then as to what is the exact difference between preaching Christ in accordance to either prophecy or mystery?

First, let it be clear that neither John the Baptist or the Apostles preached Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began. Nor did Paul receive his gospel from either John the Baptist or the Apostles, but directly from the resurrected Christ (Gal 1:11-12).

Galatians 1:11-12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- that the gospel which was preached of me
- is not after man
- For I neither received it of man
- neither was I taught it

Though Paul's gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, goes hand and hand, the two aren't exactly equated.

John the Baptist and the Apostles preached Jesus Christ according to prophecy. Simply put... they presented the covenanted promises of the Abrahamic, Messianic and New, as about ready to come to pass. Fulfillment at 'that time', was based on Israel's acceptance of the kingdom gospel. Gentiles would be beneficiaries after the fact. What John the Baptist and the Apostles understood and foresaw was the establishment of a 'new' nation of Israel based upon the Jew's response to the kingdom gospel.

Matthew 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

- Therefore say I unto you
- The kingdom of God shall be taken from you
- and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

- Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 3:19-20 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

- Repent...be converted... that your sins may be blotted out... when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord
- he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you

What John the Baptist and the Apostles understood was... the covenants made to the fathers and how a nation grew out from Abraham's physical seed, to then be identified to a

law giver in Moses, that would distinguish them from all other nations. Also, from within this nation would arise a king and kingdom that would be one day elevated above all kings and kingdoms upon the earth.

What John the Baptist and the Apostles missed however was... how and through what means was a new nation and/or body of believers were to be put together; thus enters the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began.

Life experience: Distinguishing between Israel and the early church and start of the body of Christ has always been a controversial issue. After attending several years in a Christian college, my first ministry was in a Baptist Church serving as an associate pastor and assistant administrator in a Christian School. My pastor was dispensational in his approach to the scriptures and introduced me to 'right division'. He would never let anybody nail him down as to when the church started, but would quickly say... the head was in place in Acts 1. Though I've come to my own deductions since the mid 70's, I've never forgotten his response.

In Christ

A major emphasis, of this Theme Study, centers on the differences between God justifying the circumcision 'by faith' and the uncircumcision 'through faith'. Another emphasis, of Paul's in Romans, as well as other of his pre-prison epistles, is that of both Jew and Gentile being 'in Christ'. The focus now is on the mystery surrounding being 'in Christ' and not on Paul's gospel per say.

Parallel Baptisms

Paul's pre-prison and Act's epistles are written to Gentiles that were able to understand both references and contrasts made to the Old Testament. I deal with this subject more thoroughly in chapter titled, "Gentiles". Here, we're going see how Paul explains, not only the importance of being 'in Christ', but how that contrasts with Israel under the OT.

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

- Therefore if any man be in Christ
- he is a new creature:
- old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new

1 Corinthians 1:23-31 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh,

not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

vs. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

- But of him are ye in Christ Jesus
- who of God is made unto us
- wisdom (Cp. Dt 4:6)
- and righteousness (Cp. Dt 6:24-25)
- and sanctification (Cp. Lev 20:7-8)
- and redemption (Cp. Ex 15:13)

The listing, of Christ being made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, isn't a random list pulled out of thin air. Adam and Eve were thrown out of the Garden of Eden because of disobedience. The world at Noah's time was destroyed because of wickedness. God then devised a means in which a nation would rise above all other nations, in being given a means of wisdom (Dt 4:6), righteousness (Dt 6:24-25), sanctification (Lev 20:7-8) and redemption (Ex 15:13), through Moses and the law. That nation bowed down to the heathen nations around only to be dispersed or destroyed.

Israel Baptized unto Moses

There are two baptisms tied to Moses. One is a baptism with water (Jn 1:25), executed upon entering the wilderness after being delivered out of Egyptian bondage (Ex 19:10-14). This baptism, was part of the sanctifying process that God put Israel through, along with divers washings instituted later. The other baptism, was also a part of the sanctifying process in identifying Israel unto Moses when crossing the red sea.

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

- how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea
- And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea

There are several short points to be made here that are discussed in more detail in other chapters.

1. Along with Israel, a mixed multitude (Ex 12:38 (Gentiles)) accompanied, which helps give explanation to Paul's Gentile audience during the Acts period.
2. The expression 'unto Moses', is used to identify Israel to Moses as Moses being the head of that household (Heb 3:1-5).
3. Though the 'cloud' and 'sea', were the separating elements used in Israel's parting company with the Egyptian army, it was a 'dry' baptism (Ex 14:16, 21, 22, 29). The only members of a congregation that got wet, being baptized with water, was the Egyptian army (Ex 14:26-28).

Exodus 14:29 But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

- the children of Israel walked upon dry land

Exodus 14:28 And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.

- And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them

Jew & Gentile Baptized into Christ

Before comparing the differences between the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, between that which was instituted under Moses to that which is now 'in Christ', we'll first contrast the believer's baptism 'into Christ'.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body
- have been all made to drink into one Spirit

Romans 6:3-4 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

- so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ
- were baptized into his death?
- we are buried with him by baptism into death

In dealing with this subject and these passages, I'm often reminded of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's quote, "Water, water, everywhere, And all the boards did shrink; Water, water, everywhere, Nor any drop to drink." More often than not, the word 'baptism' is typically associated with water and the truth is that there are more 'dry' baptisms in the bible than 'wet'.

Dry Versus Wet Baptisms

Two of the three baptisms, that John the Baptist mentions, are dry.

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

- I indeed baptize you with water
- he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost
- and with fire

John's baptism with water symbolizes cleansing and purification (Jn 2:6; 4:25), with roots found under the Mosaic Covenant (Num 19:9-20), now being ministered in preparation of Israel for the New Covenant (Ez 36:25). Jesus' baptism, with the Holy Ghost, is and without exception, associated with miracles (Lk 48-49; Acts 1:4-8; Mk 16:19-20), while the baptism with fire was judgment that waited just prior to establishment of a kingdom (Mt 3:10-12).

This leaves several other baptisms. There is the baptism 'unto Moses', which is being discussed and the parallel baptism of the believer 'into Christ', administered 'by' the Spirit and not to be confused with the baptism 'with' the Holy Ghost; the baptizer is different in each case, as is the result of each baptism!

There are two other baptisms in the Bible, one being a baptism of death, in which Jesus experienced (Mt 20:22-23) and the last... a baptism for the dead (1Co 15:29), in which your guess is as good as mine as to what exactly it is/was.

Of all the baptisms, found in the Bible, no more than two, at the most, is a baptism with water.

Since the parallel baptism to Israel's baptism 'unto Moses' is our baptism 'into Christ', we'll now focus on it. It is through this baptism we find our identification 'in Christ'. This baptism takes place the moment one comes to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, uniting the believer 'in Christ', with all other believers via the Spirit. This baptism is mentioned various places in Paul's epistles.

Romans 6:3-4 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into

death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

- baptized into Jesus Christ
- baptized into his death
- buried with him by baptism

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

- baptized into Christ

Ephesians 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

- one baptism

Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

- Buried with him in baptism

Just as the LORD 'caused' the baptism of Israel 'unto Moses', so the believer's baptism 'by one Spirit', is also the faith of the operation of God! Whereas the baptizer 'with' the Holy Ghost, was the Lord Jesus Himself (Mk 1:8;16:20), the baptizer who identifies the believer into Christ, is the Spirit. Exactly opposite functions!

Moses Stretched Out His Hand
the LORD caused...
All Baptized Unto Moses

Exodus 14:21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

- the LORD caused...

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all

For By One Spirit
Faith of the Operation of God
We all Baptized Into One Body

Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

- Buried with him in baptism
- through the faith of the operation of God

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or

passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- were all baptized unto Moses
- For by one Spirit
- are we all baptized into one body

Baptist's Symbolism of Romans 6:3-4?

Though having found myself in same camp before, I still find it remarkable how Baptist, as well as many baptistic churches, hang on to Romans 6, in trying to prove the mode of baptism with water, being immersion in identifying oneself in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. At same time, most Baptist and baptistic pastors admit that each of the three references, to baptism, isn't water!

- so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ
- were baptized into his death?
- we are buried with him by baptism into death

The real dilemma is to where or to whom they trace this symbolism and practice? In chapter titled, "kept secret", it is proved that neither John the Baptist or the disciples preached the cross as part of the kingdom gospel. Nor was there even understanding of the sufferings and glory of Christ! Are we to believe that neither those who baptized or were baptized, under the kingdom gospel, didn't understand the significance of the element of 'water', that was being administered? The reality is that those, of any denomination, that don't understand the role that baptism with water played, in a 'by faith' justification, has to make baptism with water fit within their church's doctrinal scheme. The truth is that not one convert stepped into Jordan, under the ministries of either John the Baptist or the disciples, believing that submitting to baptism with water was symbolizing new life in Christ via His death, burial and resurrection!

That baptism with water, ever pictured the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, is 'Baptist doctrine', not Bible doctrine.

Before making comparisons, between Israel having been baptized unto Moses and the believer's baptism into Christ, on the lighter side of things, we want to compare a translation between the KJB and NIV, on 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.

The KJB Versus the NIV

baptized unto Moses

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 (KJB) Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

baptized into Moses

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 (NIV) For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

- And were all baptized unto Moses
- in the cloud and in the sea
- They were all baptized into Moses
- in the cloud and in the sea.

There are many issues to be critical about, regarding outright omissions of verses and changes in wording within a NIV, that are pointed out in this Theme Study. However, what is simply being pointed out here is pure silliness on the part of the NIV translators. Where is the 'bible-sense', in this translation? In a KJB, the word 'unto' is used to denote the identity Israel now had to Moses... baptized 'unto' Moses. In the NIV, the word 'into', is used as found in Romans 6:3-4, 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:27, in identifying our placement 'into' Christ. All believer's identification, in Christ, is made possible because of the spiritual tie, between all believers, having the spirit of Christ via a baptism 'into' Christ. What were the translators thinking in trying to take a very large group of physical beings and insinuating, all being placed 'into' another physical being? And we're to trust rational for all other translating changes in a NIV?

Parallels Between Moses and Christ

Parallel comparisons will now be shown between Moses and Christ:

1 Corinthians 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us :

- wisdom (Cp. Dt 4:6)
- and righteousness (Cp. Dt 6:24-25)
- and sanctification (Cp. Lev 20:7-8)
- and redemption (Cp. Ex 15:13)

Baptized unto Moses Under Law

Israel's Wisdom

Deuteronomy 4:5-6 Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. 6 Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

- Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments
- Keep therefore and do them;
- for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations

Baptized into Christ Without the Law

God's Wisdom

1 Corinthians 2:7-8 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 1 Corinthians 2:12-13 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

- But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory

Israel's Righteousness

Deuteronomy 6:24-25 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. 25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

- the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God
- And it shall be our righteousness
- if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us

Israel's Sanctification

Leviticus 20:6-8 And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people. 7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. 8 And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you.

- Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God
- And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them:
- I am the LORD which sanctify you

Israel's Redemption

Exodus 15:11-13 Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? 12 Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. 13 Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

- Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed:
- thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation

- Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory
- Now we have received..., but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God
- ...not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth,
- but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual

God's Righteousness

Romans 3:21-22 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

- But now...
- the righteousness of God without the law is manifested
- which is by faith of Jesus Christ

God's Sanctification

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth
- to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ

God's Redemption

Romans 3:23-24 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

- Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

Christ is the fulfillment to the believer what the Mosaic Covenant was to Israel!

Let it be clear... John the Baptist didn't preach the mystery of Christ, kept secret since the foundation of the world and these truths in Christ. You won't find this mystery of Christ in the Gospels. The Sermon on the Mount doesn't pertain to them. One would struggle to find even bits of these truths, presented by the Apostles, in early Acts. It's not until later that we see writings from the Apostles addressing these same doctrinal issues.

1 Peter 1:1-4 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you... **18-20** Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

2 Peter 1:12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

1 Peter 2:9-12 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

- But ye are a chosen generation
- a royal priesthood
- an holy nation
- a peculiar people
- Which in time past were not a people
- but are now the people of God
- Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles

For the serious student of the word of God, it should be considered here that Paul never refers to the Gentiles that he writes to as a royal priesthood and holy nation. We must

discern hopes and callings for those who are 'in Christ', both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him, to be manifested in the dispensation of the fullness of times.

Ephesians 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

- he might gather together in one
- all things in Christ
- both which are in heaven
- and which are on earth
- even in him

Foundation of a Second Household

In Christ

The majority of denominational churches today begins the church on the day of Pentecost; Acts 2. Unfortunately, most denominations fail to discern between the kingdom gospel, proclaimed by John the Baptist and the Apostles, from that of the gospel of the grace of God through Paul to Gentiles. They also fail in discerning between the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to prophecy, from that of mystery. The denominational system is anything but united in doctrine! In answer to Paul's question, in 1 Corinthians 1:13... "Is Christ is divided?", the answer is yes. The main reason Christ is divided doctrinally today, among the hundreds of denominations, is failure to rightly divide the word of truth. Rejection of the King James Bible, as being final authority, also prohibits from coming to the unity of the faith.

There are other ministries and/or churches, that I would more closely identify with, that do recognize distinctions between the kingdom gospel and Paul's gospel, and between the preaching of Christ according to prophecy, from that of mystery. In these groups, reasons given for not starting the church at Acts 2 is in emphasizing the distinctions between messages & audiences. Within these ministries there are debates as to whether the church, the body of Christ, actually started in Acts 9, Acts 13 or Acts 28. Acts 9 records Paul's conversion. Acts 13 is when the 'door of faith' is opened to Gentiles. Acts 28, Israel is seen then as having been put aside and those Jews saved, as well as Gentiles which are of 'the faith of Abraham', are yet tied to Israel's kingdom inheritance.

What is generally viewed, within all of these positions, is that there are two distinct groups of people or churches. One church being a nation that both Jesus & Peter refers to (Mt 21:43; 1Pet2:9) and the other, a 'body of Christ' made up of Jews and Gentiles under Paul's ministry, a dispensation of grace. The church mentioned of Jesus in Matthew 16:18, would be considered separate from the church, the body of Christ, spoken of by Paul in Ephesians 1:22-23.

Regardless of which position is taken, there are issues to be dealt with on both sides of all the fences erected. The position that I have adopted, from the very beginning, is that instead of there being two separate churches, each with their own hopes & callings, there is but one church, the body of Christ, wherein are separate hopes & callings. The main basis of this argument is being... 'in Christ'.

Therefore if any man be in Christ...

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

- if any man
- be in Christ
- he is a new creature

Though approached a little differently in the chapter titled, "fullness of the Gentiles" in which the same topic is addressed, here are a few points in laying the foundation for this brief discussion.

1. The expression 'in Christ', though mostly found in Paul's epistles, is also used in same context by Peter... "Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen." **1 Peter 5:14** Other scriptures will be given to clearly demonstrate the reality of others being 'in Christ', before Paul.
2. Nobody was 'in Christ' under the Old Testament, meaning it is a New Testament truth. John the Baptist was never 'in Christ'... "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." **Matthew 11:11**
3. It was impossible to die 'in Christ' until after the resurrection of Christ.
4. The underworld, of OT saints, was emptied of its occupants at Christ's resurrection. Therefore, what happens to those converts, under the ministries of the Apostles, if they're not 'in Christ' at time of the 'rapture'... and the dead 'in Christ' shall rise first?
5. The mystery that Paul reveals in 1 Corinthians 15, is not that of a secret rapture, but what happens to those saints that did die since the resurrection of Christ.

Ephesians 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

- When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

- For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout
- and the dead in Christ shall rise first

1Cor 15:50-52 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

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- and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed

Two Houses Built of God

Moses Verily Was Faithful In All His House

Hebrews 3:1-6 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, **as also Moses was faithful in all his house.** 3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4 **For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.** 5 **And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;** 6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Acts 7:35-38 **This Moses whom they refused,** saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. 36 He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years. 37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, **A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.** 38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the

Christ As A Son Over His Own House

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mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

Matthew 16:13-18 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

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- And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock...
- **I will build my church;** and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it

Following the Logic...

Christ in the Father; Head Over a Household (Heb 3:3-6)

John 17:20-22 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

- as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee
- even as we are one

Apostles Added

John 20:21-22 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

- he breathed on them, and saith unto them,
- Receive ye the Holy Ghost

An important notation, to be made here, is that this action was taken BEFORE having received the baptism with the Holy Ghost in Acts 2. Here, the core of the body is in place.

The Head in Place

The realization of the body of Christ could not begin to take shape till the head was in place; **Acts 1:9-11.**

Acts 1:9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

- he was taken up

Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

- Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted...

Ephesians 1:19-23 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

- when he raised him from the dead
- and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places
- And hath put all things under his feet
- and gave him to be the head over all things to the church
- Which is his body
- the fulness of him that filleth all in all

The body of Christ, the fulness of him that filleth all in all compasses both heaven and earth which includes all callings seen in the following progression.

Jewish Converts Added

John 17:20-22 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

- **Neither pray I for these alone**
- **but for them also which shall believe on me through their word**
- **that they may be one, even as we are one**

Acts 2:38-41 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

- **the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls**

Acts 2:46-47 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

- **And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved**

Acts 5:14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

- **believers were the more added to the Lord**

Acts 11:19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. Acts 11:21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Acts 11:24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

- **preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only**
- **a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord**
- **and much people was added unto the Lord**

Paul (Saul) Added

Paul (Saul; Ac 11:25), who was converted in Acts 9, is still referred to as Saul at this stage and isn't called Paul till Acts 13, when separated & commissioned by the Spirit, to open the door 'of faith' to the Gentiles.

Proof that above mentioned Jewish converts were actually in Christ, as the scripture indicates, is found in Rom 16:7...

Romans 16:7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

- who also were in Christ before me

Gentile Converts Added

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles

Galatians 3:26-28 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

- For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ
- There is neither Jew nor Greek
- for ye are all one in Christ Jesus

Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

- For in Christ Jesus
- neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision
- but a new creature

Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

- so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ

Ephesians 2:18-19 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

- through him we both have access by one Spirit
- ye are no more strangers and foreigners
- but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God

Ephesians 3:6-7 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

- That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body

Christ As Head of His Body

There is no reason to believe that Christ didn't begin to fill His role, as Head of His body, other than at His ascension to the Father's right hand. To argue a starting point other than at His ascension demonstrates a misunderstanding regarding what the Body of Christ is and of its scope. One must not force the Word to fit one's theology; one's theology needs to fit the Word.

Five things are taken into account, in addressing the start of the body of Christ, based on those being placed 'in Christ':

1. Its origin at the seating of Christ at the Father's right hand (Eph 1:20-23)
2. Its scope encompassing both heaven and earth (Eph 1:10)
3. There is a building process (Mat 16:18; Eph 2:19-21)
4. Distinguishing between the gospel of the circumcision from that of the gospel of the uncircumcision; the gospel of the kingdom from the gospel of the grace of God (Gal 2:7-9; Acts 3:19-20; Eph 3:1-2)
5. Hopes and callings in giving no offense to Jew, Gentile and church of God (1Co 10:32)

There is still distinction to be made concerning hopes and callings between Gentiles, saved during the Acts period who 'feared' God, from those classified as heathen who fell outside the covenant promises made to the fathers that Paul addresses in Ephesians. Hopes and callings, regarding these two classifications of Gentiles, are dealt with in detail in the chapter titled, "Gentile".

The Church a Great Mystery

the church which is His body

The term 'the church, which is His body', comes from Ephesians 1:22-23, with another reference to 'his body', in Ephesians 5:30. A parallel passage, referencing being members of Christ's body is 1 Corinthians 12:12-28.

Ephesians 1:22-23 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

- to the church
- Which is his body

The expression, 'the fullness of him that filleth all in all', would cover both 'inheritances', relating to heaven and earth (Eph 1:10-11).

In Ephesians 5, Paul dives into exactly what the church, which is His body, is. This is an important part of the mystery he reveals.

Ephesians 5:21-33 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Paul compares Christ and the church, which is His body, to a husband and wife.

- Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands
- For the husband is the head of the wife
- even as Christ is the head of the church

Paul compares the Church to a man's body.

- Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing
- Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it
- So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies
- even as the Lord the church

Paul then shows that saints are members of Christ's own body.

- For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones

The obvious question then is... how can the Church be both a wife and a body to Christ? Verses 31-32, contain the answer to this 'great mystery'.

- For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother
- and shall be joined unto his wife
- and they two shall be one flesh
- This is a great mystery:
- but I speak concerning Christ and the church

This passage is a direct quote from Genesis 2:24, the very first marriage. That marriage was unique in that it was a direct creation. Most promises, agreements or arrangements, under the Old Testament, were covenants. Before God ended up divorcing Israel (Jer 3:8), they had entered into a covenant relationship (Ex 19:1-8). Here, there was no marriage covenant, for Eve was made specifically for Adam as she was taken out of Adam. Eve was not only Adam's wife, but she was also his body!

Genesis 2:23-24 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

- This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh
- they shall be one flesh

1st Marriage **Adam & Eve**

Marriage was a creation; not based on a covenant.

2nd Marriage **Christ (2nd Adam) & the Church**

Marriage also based on a creation; not a covenant.

Like Eve, the Church is both the wife and body of Christ. She is Christ's own helpmeet, united to Him by creation rather than a covenant.

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

- if any man be in Christ
- he is a new creature

1 Cor 15:45-47 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47 The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

- The first man Adam was made a living soul
- the last Adam was made a quickening spirit
- The first man is of the earth, earthly
- the second man is the Lord from heaven

Rom 5:12-19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

- by one man's disobedience many were made sinners
- by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous

No wonder Paul writes with concern: **1 Cor 6:15-16** 15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

- Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?
- shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?
- know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh

Christ is the "last Adam" (1 Co 15:45), the church is the "last Eve". Christ and His Church are the "Adam and Eve" of God's New Creation. The Church is Christ's helpmeet, enabling Christ to complete the "all in all," both that which is in heaven and on earth.

Eph 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

- in the dispensation of the fulness of times
- he might gather together in one all things in Christ
- both which are in heaven
- and which are on earth
- even in him

Its scope will be realized in yet future; perhaps in the Millennium? It was Paul's mission and ministry to make all men see the entire picture as related to Jew and Gentile. The Jew, God's earthly inheritance and the inclusion of the Gentile, having been hidden till now, with a heavenly inheritance in view. This manifold wisdom of God was and is being observed by the principalities and powers in heavenly places (Eph 3:1-11)!

The Lord Jesus spoke of a special unity that would exist between He, His Father, His disciples and those that would believe through their word, but it was Paul who owned the doctrine demonstrating the mystery of Jew and Gentile 'in Christ'.