

Title: The Mystery of Christ

2m

Text: Ephesians 3:1-7

The word "mystery" is used 27<sup>times</sup> in the N.T. And in Paul's usage of it, he uses it 10 of those 27 times. 6 of which are in Ephesians. The other 4 are in the book of Colossians.

Paul's use of the word is unique. A mystery of not something that is mysterious. It means that it was hidden in the past, but it is now revealed. What Paul is talking about in the mystery was in the O.T. It was hidden. It was <sup>not</sup> obvious. And now in the N.T. it is completely exposed. And God is telling us exactly what he wants to accomplish.

Take your Bibles and turn to Ephesians chapter 3...

(Read Ephesians 3:1-7)

Join me, please, in a moment of prayer as we begin

You know, Paul, when he gets talking has a hard time stopping. You do have that problem. He goes on and on. It is really tremendous. But you wander where to put the period.

Here is another example. A little different from what we found in the first two chapters. But it is still the same old Paul

He starts out in Vs 1 by saying "For this reason."..But he doesn't get around to finishing that remark until Vs 14. Some of you have that indicated in your Bibles. If you will notice at the end of Vs 1 there is a little line drawn. Some of you have that in your Bibles.

The point is that it is a parenthesis from Vs 2 to Vs 13. And then in Vs 14 he picks up the originally thought once again.

So, I would like to show you where he is heading so that you might understand the importance of what <sup>we disguised this name</sup> he is saying in Vs 2 through 7. Paul has been talking in this book so far about God's great plan. Whereby he has brought us to himself. And that he has made both Jew and Gentile into one body in Christ. And through the work of the cross he has made this possible.

Now, he is telling all the Ephesians this because he is now going to pray for them that they might get the power of God into their lives. In order that they might walk as ~~God~~<sup>God</sup> wants them to walk in a Godless and sinful society. So, that the impact of their lives will result in the conversion of many people. <sup>✓</sup> Paul is dealing in this book with problems that we see today. That is that folks learn a lot about God's word. They take in ~~in~~<sup>but</sup> they don't do anything with it. And Paul is going to challenge them. Hite at the core of what they are and what God wants to do through their lives.

And so at the end of chapter 3 he is going to pray for power. In reality it comes from the Holy Spirit, but it is in the whole sphere of love. You see, the reason why the Ephesians were not reaching out to their world, is because they didnt have love for one another. They lacked unity, which he will talk about in chapter 4. And they lacked a godly life style. That is the base of all of our witness to the world.

So, in building up to that, he is telling them what God's purpose is in making this new thing <sup>called</sup> "the church." It isn't so we will just sit Sunday after Sunday doing nothing and just drink in. The purpose of the church is to permeate society with the mystery of the Gospel.

And I want to tell you what that is to start with: The mystery that Paul is talking about is HOW GENTILES ARE GOING TO BE SALVED. That is the mystery of the Gosepl.

The mystery to a Jew hidden in the O.T. <sup>you see</sup> ~~and~~ a Jew was never ask to evangelis a Gentile. ~~by the way,~~ <sup>that</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>a</sup> brain new <sup>idea</sup>, ~~we are now going to reach~~ ~~the Gentiles~~. And frankly it was culture <sup>was</sup> to that early Jewish chruch. The Gentiles were unclean, they were dogs, and they didn't want anything to do with them. But God's Gospel was now going to go to the whole world. That is the mystery that is in Christ. That He would make both Gentile and Jew into one... <sup>That is the mystery being revealed</sup> I like to bput it this way: We Gentiles got in by the skin of our teeth. It was to the Jew first. And to the Gentile as a result of the grace and compassion and mercy of God.

<sup>mt</sup> There are a couple of things that Paul starts with that I want you to see.

Vs 1 says "I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles." He is reminding them of his own commitment to the mystery of <sup>taking</sup> ~~making~~ the gospel to the Gentile world. And there are two things that I would point out to you there by way of introduction.

(1) One, is that it is obvious to me, and I hope to you, that Paul accepted his trials as being part of God's plan. He said "I am the prisoner of Christ Jesus"...And I like that.

So often, we interpret what we are going through as being outside of God's plan or his will. But, the spirit filled christian is giving thanks for all things, says Ephesians 5. The Bible tells us that in everything we should give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us.

Now, let me illustrate....I wonder what you all would think of if you ~~gat~~ <sup>got</sup> here next Sunday morning and someone told you: "PASTOR BILL is in Jail."

Now, I don't know how you would react to that news. I am sure that some of you would react like they did to Paul. "Yay, the guys really blow it. He is in jail. It was probably something that he did. I know that guy. He is a Pastor, but I know what he is really like. He got what he deserved."

And you know, there were a lot of people who did that to Paul. It really hurt him. They didn't take the time to find out why he was in jail. They just jumped on the negative. And they just put, as Paul indicates, a heavy burden on him. A real heavy burden. He needed love and encouragement and support. He needed someone to come around and say, "We love you Paul. We are praying for you. And it is exciting to see what God is going to do."...~~But, most~~

But most of the folks didn't understand and so they criticized.

(2) And there was a second reaction that I believe some of you would have.

What are we going to do now? Oh, Bill, is in jail. Now what are we going to do? Can you imagine what it was like in the early church? They didn't even have a Bible. They didn't have a pastoral staff to lean on.

They have the Apostle Paul running around telling them about christ. And all of a sudden he is in jail. They have taken our leader away. And some of them were losing heart. They were getting discouraged and were falling away. Paul knew about them also.

Would you turn over to Philippians chapter 1, please. I want to show you just how excited he was. Paul the prisoner of Christ. You know, when he went to a town, he didn't ask about the motels in that town. He always ask about the jails, because he knew that he might end up there anyway....

Can you imagine walking into a town and asking: "How is your jail."... In Philippians 1 notice what he wrote about his imprisonment...Vs 12..."I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well-known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else."

Now, just to show you "the everyone else", turn to chapter 4, please, and notice vs 22. This is kind of exciting. Paul is in jail. And he is saying that the gospel is going throughout the Praetorian guard. And he writes here in Vs 22 "And all the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household."

Now, that is really exciting. Because Caesar is Nero. He is the one who put the christians of stakes at night and lite a touch to them while they were alive in order to light up his orgies. That is Nero.

He is the one who burned Rome and blamed it upon the christians. Nero.. He burned Rome in order to build a golden city unto himself....

I remember sitting in my Latin class in college and my Latin professor said it. And when he did a little light went on in my mind. He was sharing how Nero murdered his wife and his mother-in-law and several relatives because they professed faith in Jesus christ.

And I thought "what a tremendous things" Because all it says in the Bible, in Philippians 4 :22 is "all the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household."

Can you imagine what those christian who were fearing because Paul was in jail, worrying about their lives being in danger, when Paul writes: " Hallelujah time. It is not sad time. There are saints, even in Caesar's own family. And the gospel has spread throughout the whole praetorian guard house. I mean we are having a revival. It is great. Come and join me..."

Now, I don't know if you have put it down to where you and I live, but you know, most of the time we don't think this way.

Take, for example, having a flate in your car on the way to work..I don't know how you react to that. WHY DID GOD CAUSE THIS? You know, many things run through your mind. It could be God's judgement on my poor stewardship for letting my tires get so thine...

Or, it could be that God's is ~~judging~~ judging me because I did something wrong. What is it Lord!!!

But, who of us stops and says, "Lord, I just thank you for this flate here on my car on my way to work. I know I will be late to work and there is no jake in my tunck. But, Lord, I am so excited. Who do you have for me to minister to? Who is going to come along that I can share Christ with?"

Now, many of us think that way? But, that is what Paul is saying. It doesn't matter what happens to you. They are simply opportunities to share ~~Jesus~~ the love of Jesus christ with people.

What an exciting way to live. Wouldn't you like to have that attitude? I like what Larry Palmen in his book, Rise up to conquer, says: "It is a kingdom mentality."

Let's stop being defensive, and discouraged, he says, and lets get on with the Master's business. And get excited with what God can do in us even in those tough times."

You know, when things are going right, the question should be: What is God going to do through that circumstance. Let's get excited.

And it is exciting just to read the testimony of Paul. You see, he really understood that the purpose of God in those trails was not simply for himself, but it was for others. Do you see that?

So often, we cry "Why me Lord!" And sometimes I wish God would shout from heaven: "WHY NOT!!!"

I mean God uses trails in our life...WHY?...To minister to others... 2 Corintians says "the God of all comfort who comforts us does so..so that we might may minister to others who are suffering."

Look, your trails, your difficults are not just for you. If you only see "you" in it, you are very, very self-centered. You are missing the point of what God wants to do in your life.

What you go through, God will often take and share it with somebody else later in your life. Thank him for it. God will use everything for his glory. All things are being caused jfor the glory of God. And theyd are working together for good to those who love him and are called according to his purpos  
Thank the Lord for it.

Out

This man  
Terrible

( ) Well, there are three things that I would like to share with you about that mystery.

(1E) First, the source of Paul knowledge about that mystery. <sup>Paul</sup> He knew that people where questioning his right to give them new information that was in addition to the Old Testament. And Paul is going to deal with that in this passage. This is one of the most important passages to christians in telling us how we know the N.T. is of God. And why we know there isn't any more additional revelations from God. Very, very important.

(2) So, <sup>First</sup> we are going to look at the source of <sup>Paul's</sup> his knowledge. And secondly, we are going to look at the secret of the mystery; (3 ) and third a little about Paul's own sarvice, in behalf of thiss mystery.

(1 ) O.K. what is the source of Paul's knowledge? Notice, <sup>(1A)</sup> first of all in Vs 2 he says "the stewardship of God." I am responsible to ~~be~~ what I have been given. Boy, is that fundamental to a christian's life. Do whom much is given, much is required.

You know, I think of that often as I realize the amount of Bible teaching we have in this church. Much is given, much is required.

I am told that 2.8 billion people in the world have never heard of Jesus. And to whom much is given, much is required.

Paul said, "I want you to know that I am a steward of God's grace." Meaning, I didn't deserve it. God didn't look at Paul and say, "Hay, you are a tremendous thing to use."

Paul said, "It is a stewardship of God's grace which was given to me."

*That is what a steward is*

Now, <sup>friends</sup> a steward is intrusted by the owner of the house to manage all the affairs and take care of the investment. The owner takes quite a resk because the guy could walk off with a lot. He said "I have committed to you the stewardship of this mystery. Remember, the mystery is to share christ with Gentiles. Are you a steward?"

Turn over to 1 Corinthians chapter 4. I Cor. chapter 4 verse 1 and 2. The source of that knoweldge was certainly ~~from God~~ <sup>what</sup> ~~who~~ he is revealing in the book of Ephesians, but with that comes a certain accountability. A responsibility that we all have. If you have a Bible, God expectts you to read and study it and to learn from it. And you become accountable for that information in terms of sharing it. Now look at Vs 1 and 2.

(read I Cor 4:1-2)

We are stewards of the mysteries of God that God has given to us about how the gospel is going to go to the <sup>Lost</sup> ~~Gentiles~~. And God is going to put Jew and Gentile into one body. We are stewards of that, Paul said. And we are to be trustworthy and faithful to that charge. *are we?*

Come back to Ephesians, again...

(2<sup>nd</sup>) The second thing in just looking at the source of that knowledge you received is that Paul indicates that it was direct revelation.

Paul is telling prople who were questioning his wisdom and what he was saying. He is saying, "I <sup>got</sup> ~~go~~ this directly from God."

Now, <sup>been friends</sup> ~~found~~ we assume a lot. Looking back with our N.T. glasses and saying, "Yay, Paul was who he was. And that is the Bible. I got it now." But imgine if you lived in that day and you were a good Jew and you ~~know~~ the O.T., and all of a sudden this little Jew comes along and He says, "Hay, I have some new suff. A revelation from God."

Now, what would you think?... You would probable do like many people do today. Somebody comes along and <sup>ask</sup> says, "God spoke to me last night."... "And here is what he said.".....And a lot of folks today are saying this. "The Lord spoke to me the other night." Oh, really, what verse?....

*Other people ask*  
~~you say, "wait a minute!~~ How do <sup>you</sup> I know that the Bible in its 66 books is complete and finally.....?

If you are a Jew, you already believe in the 39 books of the O.T. And if you had all those books and then Paul came along you would question him to. What right do you have to add to the word of God?

And Paul says, "I want you to know that I got this stright from Jesus." Oh!! Big Deal!!!!...

That is the same thing that the Mormon's argue. Why not add the book of Mormons? After all the angel Monroy appeared, supposely, to Joseph SMITH. And gave it to him as direct revelation. So, why shouldn't we accept it. And what about everybody else special revelations? And what about the Aprocrypha books? The Catholic church says the Protestant Bible is a little short. We are taking away. There are fourteen books that belong in the Bible that we don't have.

*Dear French*  
~~People~~, this is a serious issue. It is bigger than a lot of us want to admit. We can sit in the comfort and security of our church and say "I love the Bible." And never realize that there is a world that thinks very different about this. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THIS BIBLE OF 66 BOOKS IS TRUELY THE WORD OF GOD. That it is complete and final. And nothing is to be added to and taken away from it. <sup>?</sup> THAT IS A BIG ISSUE. A BIG, BIG ISSUE.

The revelation that Paul received. He said that it is direct from God.

Now, turn over to Galatians 1 and let's read about it. Galatians 1... Paul knew that people were talking about this and here is what he said..

(Read Gal. 1:11-24)

This is an interesting problem. *these early christians were* ~~They~~ *couldn't* are not buying the argument that *Paul* got a direct revelation from God. But they ~~cannot~~ *Killing* denie the fact that a miracle has taken place in his life. "He who once was ~~killing~~ *Killing* christians is now preaching christ." And they were glorifying God for what God was doing, but they are still saying, "Paul, I don't know about this other stuff." This revelation from God....BACK TO EPHESIANS AGAIN...

So, Paul says that he got this revelation directly from God.

(3) Another thing that made people upset, if they didn't believe Paul, is what Paul said in Vs 4...He said, "~~that~~/a/" and by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ."



Now, "ingight" refers to "that which comes into the mind which brings a full comprehension of the truth."

So What Paul is saying is, "I know something that you don't know."...Now, I don't know ~~what~~ how you react when someone says that to you. But, I believe you can imagine those knowledgeable Jews saying...."RIGHT!!!...That guy has a real problem."

"I know something that you don't know." God has given me insight into this mystery. And it has come from the Lord.

Another thing he says which is very interesting is he deals with the relationship of new information to the other generations in the O.T. And we are getting back to the problem of how we know that this N.T. should be added to the O.T., and how we know that it is <sup>Not</sup> complete and final.

(4) Take a look at it...Vs 5...Paul said, "which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in, or by means, of the spirit."

(1) First of all, when he said "other generations" he made ~~made~~ a very interesting usage of the word "other".

The word "other" can mean "another of the same kind" or "another of a different kind".....

So, Let me ask you a question: If you looked at the O.T. writers next to the N.T. writers, do you think they were writers of "the same kind" or "writers of a different kind?" *Which is it?*

It is interesting to me, that Paul choose the word "of a different kind." He is saying "those generations <sup>O.T.</sup> are of a different nature than what we are <sup>Who</sup> who are writing the N.T.

And I ask you, "What is that differenciae?".....

He is saying, in other generations, that is others of a different kind, they didn't know about this mystery of taking the ~~gospel~~ gospel to all the Gentile world. They didnt know it.

*The difference is - The mystery is now being revealed*

They did know that the Messiah was to bring blessings to the Gentiles. ~~But they were never divinely commissioned.~~ <sup>Now readily</sup> Everyone who ever wrote an O.T. book was called a...<sup>4</sup>"PROPHET".....

→ In favor of God

God chose "Prophets." Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us that. ~~He~~ spoke through the prophets in various ways and at different times. God never used anyone who wasn't "a prophet"...

And those prophets who wrote the O.T. they didn't always know what they were writing. But God said, "You write it."

I think some folks believe that what God ask them to do was to write down their own feelings and interpretations. That is not what the Bible says, God directly spoke to them and told them what to write. Over 5,000 times we read "thus spoke the Lord." Many times we read, "The word of the Lord came unto me and said "write."....They didn't even know what they were writing. Many of the things they wrote were future. They are still future. They didn't even know what they were about 2 thousand 500 years ago or more..

Have any of you ever ~~take~~ taken a religious class in college?..... You know one of the interesting discussions in those classes deals with this problem? Do you remember what they said about Moses? Most people in the secular world cannot understand how Moses wrote: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus Numbers, and Deuteronomy. They cannot understand that.

They say, What Moses ~~did~~ did was act like a collector. He got all of these ancient mythological writings and he sort off purified them all and put them together. After all, how could he have known about creation? Moses lived around 1400 B.C. and that is a long time after creation. So, how could he have known about creation, and Abraham and Issac and Jacob. So, how could he know?

There is only one problem with this. It is balony....It is not what the Bible says. If you think that Moses simplyly gathered the viewpoints of his society and the oral traditions of the Jewish families, if you think that is how Moses did it, then I agree with all of those secular folks, we have an untrustworthy book here. It is very questionable.

That isn't how God wrote the Bible. God directly revealed to Moses. How did Moses know about Adam? From the best source available. GOD ALMIGHTY. Don't you understand that God never relied upon the human instarment.

2 Peter chapter 1 says "No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from ~~themselves~~ or by means of God."

How do I know that this book is really of God? How do I know that this is God's revelation to me? How do I know that it is God speaking to me and my <sup>Giving us</sup> ~~Life?~~ <sup>The O.T.</sup>....God spoke...And in other generations he spoke only to prophets.

( ) Now, who wrote the N.T. O.T. written by prophets. N.T. written by who?.....Apostles  
*People say - Well that is great, but what about*  
~~Now, there are two problems in all of that~~ : MARK AND LUKE....People often teach...Apostles plus Mark and Luke...

NO..NO...NO...Luke, according to Acts 16 and following joined the Apostolic team. <sup>So</sup> ~~and~~ according to the Bible, Luke is also an Apostle.

Well, what about Mark? Some people say ~~that Mark never wrote Mark// They say that Peter wrote Mark//~~ Mark was not an apostle...YES, HE WAS... He was on the first missionary team. He was part of the ministry. Mark was an apostle and so was Luke.

You say, is that all of the apostles. NO!!! John, Peter, James, Jude, Paul, Mark, Luke, & Matthew.....Is that it?.....No, there were more apostles.. ~~Did~~ Thomas write a book.....NO...  
Did Barabas write a book.....NO...  
Did Syvanous write a book.....NO....  
Did Timothy write a book....No!!... Paul wrote a book to Timothy...

Well, what were those Apostles? I want you to look at this very carefully Look at Vs 5...."which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets...

You see, the Jews knew that God could only speak through Prophets. So, the question becomes: Paul, you say that you are an apostle, how can you write scripture or receive new revelation since God ~~only~~ only does it through prophets? .....ANSWER...The Apostles who wrote scripture are also prophets.

And to prove that: He ties the two together. HOLY APOSTLES AND PROPHETS.. In the Greek construction it is connecting equals....THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS. It connects equals....

The Apostles were prophets who wrote the scriptures. And when Paul used the word "HOLY" he was saying that this is a separate select group from other Apostles and prophets who did not write scripture.

The word "holy" means "to set apart". So, God took a few of the Apostles *Set them apart to write* and they ~~wrote~~ the scriptures.

*or* It is also interesting that they were known to Paul in his day. *(now)* Are the scriptures final? Yes.... *How do we know that?*

Turn over to Revelation chapter 22....Revelations chapter 22. Paul, in his day knew that select group of Apostles and prophets who received direct revelation from God. And people ask: IS THAT FINAL? HOW DO I KNOW?

Revelation 22:18-19....John is writing. He is the last of the Apostles to be alive. That is the writing Apostles....(READ VS 18-19)....

*o* Now, that sounds kind-of final to me. HOW ABOUT YOU?.....You can't add to it or take away from it.

People often come up with this problem. "Pastor, that is only referring to the book of Revelation. Because it says "the words of the prophecy of this book."...So, how do we know that there couldn't be additional books.... Just as we had Apostles add books to the O.T., why couldn't we have Apostles living today who could write and add books to the N.T.?"

ANSWER:...Have you ever stopped and thought what the book of Revelation is all about?...If you can't add to the ~~book of the Revelation you can add~~ Revelation of the book of Revelation you can't add *others* ~~another~~, period....

Do you know what is in the book of Revelation?...It tells us all future events. It goes all the way into the eternal state. HOW CAN YOU ADD TO THAT? As long as God is....So, he has told his message. It is eternal. The eternal Word.

In Psalms it says that it was forever settled in the heavens.

The point is: at what point in time is that word which God settled wirtten, complete and final?

John, who is the last of the writing apostles, writes abound 95 A.D. the book of Revelation and says "It is done".....You cannot add to it. And you cannot take away from it.... *Period*

<sup>Jude</sup>  
~~Jews~~ also knew that there was a point in time when it would be over. Because he said that it was "once and for all delivered unto the saints." It is finished. It is done. It is completed. There is no new revelation.

The next time someone says to you, "You know, the Lord spoke to me and said,"...You say..."what verse..."..."what verse"...

There is no way that anyone of us can give a direct revelation from God to anyone else that is not in conformaty to that which God, himself, says he has already delivered in final form: THE WORD OF GOD....That is why you have to be careful how you carry it. It is dynamite. God's message. It is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. And it can do amazing things in your life. Because IT..IS..THE..WORD..OF..GOD..

<sup>Now,</sup>  
(2E) ~~G.K.~~ what is the secret to this mystery? I have already told you, but let's look at what the Bible says in Vs 6.....(READ VS 6)

(1F) Now, first of all as it relates to the body of Christ. There are two things being said, )1 ) One, we fellow heirs. That deals with rewards. The reward that God promised to the Jews, he is now saying belongs also to the Gentiles. That was bran new. What tremendous news to the Gentile listeners.

(2F) And secondly, we are fellow-members. And that deals with relationships. And the Jews who had a hard time with the unclean Gentiles, now, were being told that they were fellow members in the same body.

So, <sup>and</sup> as it relates to the body of Christ, this mystery is that God is going to put Gentiles in the same relationship with the same reward as the Jews.

(3F) He also said that they were going to be fellow partakers of the promise. Now, what promise is he talking about? Some folks say that it is the promise to Abraham. When God said "in thee I will bless all the families of the earth."

I don't see that. I understand the promise to be the HOLY SPIRIT. Let me show you <sup>why</sup> that. In luke 24:49 Jess told the Apostles to wait in Jersualem until "they receive the promise of the Father <sup>that</sup> that will come upon you."

In Acts 1:8 Jesus said "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."

Acts remains us what Jesus said in Luke 24. You are to wait in Jersuaelm until the promise of the Father comes. In Acts 2, when Peter is preaching ~~to~~ the Gospel on the Day of Pentecost, he says "the promise is unto you and to your children and to all you are far off and as many as the Lord God shall call." WHAT IS THE PROMISE? Acats 2:38 says "it is the gift of the Holy Spirit." THAT PROMISE IS TO BOTH JEW AND GENTILE.

Now, tie that in with what I Cor 12:13 says: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, ect."

*So*, The promise that we are all partakers whether Jew or Gentile is the Holy Spirit. The very one who makes us ONE.

Until you are born again, you are not a part of the body of christ. Uhtil your body becomes the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, you are not in God's church.....The Holy Spirit of God is the only one who can ~~make~~ us one.....

*4F1* Now, look at Vs 7....Paul told us the source of his information. It was from God. Also, the real secret is that God put Jew and Gentile together.

*3E1* Now, the thing that I don't want you to miss, or you miss the whole point is Paul then tells us what service we should render to God because of what he has given to us.

In Vs 7 we read "of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power."

The word "minister" is our English word "Deacon."

Now, what Paul is saying in this vs 7 is that my ~~my~~ service to God is volinteer. God gave me a great message to share. But he doesn't force me to be committed. He calls me with his love. He ask me by means of the power that comes into my life by the Spirit to share the message around the world. I want you to know that I am a willing servant.

Paul said in 2 Cor 5:14 "The love of ~~Christ~~ controls me." I am an ambassordor of Christ. ...He was committed to sharing the Gospel. And it was willing service. He was ~~forced~~ *NOT*, or begged into service. He was willing.

And this willing service was based upon ~~two~~ *two* things as it is in every one ~~of~~ *the* of our lives.... ~~two~~ *two* things...

OF Our service to God in sharing the gospel is based upon God's ~~power~~ <sup>Power</sup>.

You see, we cannot do it within our own power. That is why we need God's ~~own~~ power. The power of the Holy Spirit.

Vs 7 says "according to the working of His power." You and I will never reach our world, whether it is one or five or hundred, we will never reach it, without the power of the Holy Spirit..Never...

Many christians are afraid to share their faith. Basical they fear what others think of them. They fear the pressure of the situation.

2F But <sup>mean</sup> the Bible says that when you are controlled by the spirit you speak with boldness. When the Holy Sprit gives us power, folks, it isn't making us act funny or speak funny or what ever. When the Spirit of God is controlin your life, the power of God that ~~is~~ is talking about is BOLDNESS TO SHARE YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST.

In Acts 1:8 when Jesus said, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." WHAT WAS IT FOR?....You shall be my ~~witnesses~~ witnesses.....

The power of the HOLY Spirit coming upon our life is intended to enable us to boldly proclaim God's message, regardless <sup>of</sup> the responses...

Many of us refuse to witness because we are afraid of what people will say, or how they will respond.

Listen, the power of the Holy Spirit inables the christian to be bold....

Inother words, what is our commitment to the mystery of Christ?...

Over 2.8 billion people in the world need to hear the gosopel. Hundreds of people in ~~the~~ <sup>doomed</sup> need to hear about the Lord.

I am simplyly saying, folks, that there are lots of folks who need to hear about Jesus. People all around us who have never heard....

If only we would get commited....I am a steward of the mystery of the Gospel. And so are you.....Every christian is to be a witness....WHY DON'T WE START DOING THE LORD'S Work...

Let us close in prayer

*Young people - check the future - You are the seed of the future*