**New Hope Global Sermon A Revealed Mystery**



**Introduction**

Our theme today is “A Revealed Mystery.” I think throughout history mystery has held intrigue for people. Today that interest is clear. Even on the Hallmark Channel - “where love happens,” the Hallmark Movies and Mysteries branch is attracting some of the regular Hallmark actors and actresses. Mysteries seem to appeal to a large audience, as one meaning of the word mystery indicates: A mystery is “any thing or event that remains so secret or obscure as to excite curiosity. . . [Mysteries in literature are] novels or plays written around an event, especially a crime and the gradual discovery of who committed it.” (Webster’s New World Collegiate Dictionary, 4th edition, Wiley Publishing 2008). It reminds me of the Board Game Clue which launched in North America in 1949 and is still sold today in the big box stores like Target and Walmart around the country. Remember the Agatha Christie Mysteries, Sherlock Holmes, lady detective Nancy Drew mysteries for children (I read every book in that series!) or the comic creation of the bumbling Inspector Clouseau of the Pink Panther Movie series? Entertaining stuff!

But another meaning of mystery is in the non-fiction genre and is more Biblically relevant. It refers to a puzzle, something people can’t quite figure out. Sadly, often the character and ways of God fall into this category for many people, don’t they? In areas of religion, curiosity can wane and people give up trying to make sense of it all, so they walk away from what they can’t understand.

But the Apostle Paul reframes God’s revealed mystery as good news. In Colossians chapter 1 that revelation becomes the centerpiece for the Christian life and our theme in this series of Living in Christ. Paul says: “God has given me the responsibility of serving his church by proclaiming his entire message to you. 26This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God’s people. 27For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you (Col. 1:25). Paul is writing the letter to Gentile believers in Colossae, and tells THEM the good news that Christ Lives in them.

However, to be honest. this new revelation was not well received by many Jews in Jesus day, nor is it welcomed by most Jews today. The Jews felt that their special privileges as the chosen race of God were for them alone – that included the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law and the promises about the Messiah. “Most took for granted that the Messiah’s purpose in coming was to restore glory and privilege to Israel - alone. [So] Christ among the Gentiles and for the Gentiles seriously undermined most Jewish expectations. It seemed at best to be a betrayal; if true, God was acting in contradiction to an agreed course of actions” -(David Garland, *NIV Application Commentary, Colossians*, Zondervan, 1998, p. 126) – as they understood it. And that’s the key. Revelation can open our eyes to see truths we had never seen before. It is threatening when it directly contradicts what we presumed to be true.

The Jews may not have welcomed this revealed mystery, but, unless I miss my guess, most of us hearing or reading this sermon are Gentiles, not Jews. And for us to be made “heirs of Salvation, when we had been without God and without hope in the world Is GREAT NEWS. We are brought into the family of faith in God along with those from every tribe and tongue and kindred and nation (mostly all other non-Jews)!

Still, for millions, maybe billions of people around the world this mystery revealed hardly creates a ripple in their thinking. It is a ho-hum, a so what? Something perhaps to give a nod of recognition to, but not life-transforming

**And that is where the agnostics, the atheists, the nominal Christians and those from other religions are Wrong. Dead Wrong. Here’s why. They have not understood the radicalness of salvation in Christ – i.e., who this Jesus is who comes to indwell every believer in Him.**

So I invite us to listen again to Paul’s description of the risen, ascended Christ – the One whose resurrection we just celebrated and since Pentecost, the One who now does come to indwell every Christian believer. Colossians 1:15-19:

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Col.1%3A15-19&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29441a)] 16for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. 17He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. 18Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Col.1%3A15-19&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29444b)] So he is first in everything. 19For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Him and you have been brought to fullness of life in Him.NLT

That means that this Jesus Christ has chosen to live **in His fullness** in every believer. If we can wrap our heads around this truth, it can radically transform every aspect of our thought life, our emotional life, our church life, our national life, our global community, our purpose for living, our hope after death and our sufficiency for every trial and devastation we face. Christ living in us is amazing news when you understand who He is.

So, let’s go over the description of the ascended Christ in Colossians 1 again:

**1.Col. 1:15** - Jesus Christ is all creation’s Creator – (that includes you and me and every constellation and being that exists)

**2.Col. 1:16** - He is over all the unseen world with its rulers and authorities in the evil realm and well as all the hosts of heaven

**3.Col. 1:17** - He holds all creation together. Scientifically this is astounding. Life is made up of atoms. Yet within every single atom is this incredible force that seeks to break out in a million directions. The Bible tells us it is all held together by Jesus. In the same way when our own world seems to be breaking apart, or we fear that disintegration of our physical or emotional well-being, Jesus is the One who can hold us together by the word of his power. This is the true basis for all mental and emotional health!

**4.Col. 1:18** - He is the head of the church. We need to stop here and consider the implication of this fact. It means that everything we do and dream and plan and hope for will thrive **IF** we are submitting to His direction and authority. God has the plan for all history which He will accomplish, and the church – each and every church – has a role to play in that plan. Because God has the supreme good for all creation, every church, and every believer in that plan, His people need the confidence and trust to give Him Lordship over every detail for the church. But that’s the catch. Will we submit? Proverbs 3:5-6 warns:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” ESV

The Message paraphrases this a bit more graphically:

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don’t try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he’s the one who will keep you on track. Don’t assume that you know it all. Run to God! Run from evil! Your body will glow with health, your very bones will vibrate with life!

God’s ways are guaranteed to be more redemptive, flourishing, beneficial to everyone than the plans we come up with!! Let’s believe it and follow Him wholeheartedly.

**5.Col. 1:18** - Christ is supreme above everything. As Paul tells the Philippians “every knee will bow to Jesus at the end of time and every tongue confess He is Lord to the glory of God the father. Phil2:10-11. Every tongue, Every ruler, Every spirit and authority that is currently wrecking havoc and suffering in the world. Every knee. will bow to Christ .

**6.And, finally, Col. 1:19-** All the fullness of God dwells in Christ and through the Spirit each believer “has been given fullness in Christ” as well. There is nothing you need that God cannot supply from his infinite wisdom and grace and mercy and forgiveness and well-being and security and life-purpose. All is in Christ and He is the One living in you and me as believers!

Beloved, this is the Hallelujah good news of the gospel, all as a result of Christ’s resurrection and ascension and the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The very Christ Paul just described in Col. 1:15-19 is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Christ for whom nothing is impossible. This is the Christ who dwells in us as Christian believers - Christ Living in you, the hope of glory! Praise God. Amen and amen.

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