

1. See you September 11! (Note: Our summer newsletter has the wrong LifeLines verse for 9/11! My fault! Stay tuned!)
2. Until then, join us Monday nights, 5:30 sharp, beginning July 10, in the Seekers Classroom, for...  
Monday Movie Night! Enjoy inspiring Christian-based movies! Bring popcorn, food & drink, if you like!

## LifeLines June 26, 2023

### Today's Scripture: 1 Verse

#### Colossians 1:26-27

**...The mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages & generations but has now been revealed to the saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

#### WHY WE'RE HERE

2 Timothy 3:16-17, All scripture is inspired by God & is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

#### CONTEXT

Paul is writing from prison in Rome to the faithful believers in Colossae. He commends them for receiving the word of the gospel from Epaphras, “a faithful minister of Christ” (vs7-8). Epaphras relayed to Paul that the Colossians “have comprehended the grace of God & been bearing fruit already.” Paul wants them to continue leading lives worthy of the Lord & to please Him by continuing to bear fruit in their good works. He encourages them by explaining their inheritance as saints (believers). He is genuinely interested in them & strives to make the Word of God fully known to them.

In addition, Paul knows the answer to *a mystery*, & his mission is to reveal that answer to everyone – Jew, Gentile, everyone. This LifeLines verse is considered by some to be one of the most amazing verses in the New Testament & the highest peak of the Christian doctrine of salvation!

## **DIFFERENT VERSIONS** (Versions not listed are similar to the NRSV.)

### **AMP**

That is, the mystery which was hidden [from angels & mankind] for ages & generations, but has now been revealed to His saints (God's people). God [in His eternal plan] chose to make known to them how great for the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in & among you, the hope & guarantee of [realizing the] glory.

### **GW** (God's Word Translation)

In the past, God hid this mystery, but now He has revealed it to His people. God wanted His people throughout the world to know the glorious riches of this mystery – which is Christ living in you, giving you the hope of glory.

### **MSG**

This mystery has been kept in the dark for a long time, but now it's out in the open. God wanted everyone, not just Jews, to know this rich & glorious secret inside out, regardless of their background, regardless of their religious standing. The mystery in a nutshell is this: Christ is in you, so therefore you can look forward to sharing in God's glory. It's that simple.

### **NCV**

This message is the secret that was hidden from everyone since the beginning of time, but now it is made known to God's holy people. God decided to let His people know this rich & glorious secret which He has for all people. This secret is Christ Himself, who is in you. He is our only hope for glory.

### **NIRV** (New International Reader's Version)

(This is how the NIRV states the end of our verse.) And here is what the mystery is. Christ is in you. He is your hope of glory.

### **NLT** (New Living Translation)

This message was kept secret for centuries & generations past, but now it has been revealed to God's people. For God wanted them to know that the riches & glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing His Glory.

### **SELAH**

## **BREAKING DOWN THE VERSE**

*The mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages & generations...* At the right time, God chose to make His Son known to the world *and* reveal the purpose of His coming. Since the beginning of time, this surprise was concealed from the world-at-large until prophets began prophesying about the coming of a Messiah to “save the world.” (Moses was the first prophet to do so. See Deuteronomy 18 verses below.)

Paul said these things were hitherto unknown – mysteries. Gentiles didn't know there *was* a mystery. Even Jews couldn't fathom what God had in store. Paul reveals the mystery - all they (& we) have inherited with the death & resurrection of Jesus. Believers have inherited glorious riches, an overwhelming wealth of glory! Paul said that what *had been* a secret is now unveiled for all to claim *if* they will only believe & declare Jesus to be their Lord & Saviour. This was true in Paul's day, & the same is true today.

*but has now been revealed to the saints...* The time was finally right for this secret, this mystery to be revealed for every believer to experience. In Christ, *all* the mysteries & secret things of God are revealed to His people, the church.

*to them God chose to make known...* Here's what God was making known – That He, the eternal, almighty, great & awesome God had come so close to His children that He was now living in them. As thanks for their faith & belief, He was willing to make His home *with* them, *in* them. Real Christians don't just believe intellectually in Christ. They know that Christ is *in* them! That's glorious good news! It's a new truth & life that awaits all believers.

*how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery...* What a gift to the Gentiles! Jews were always referring to themselves as the chosen people. Now they weren't the only ones God chose to enjoy a new status before Him - a new standing with the promise & privilege of complete forgiveness of sins, sanctification, & eternal life!

*which is Christ in you...* If you are a believer, *never doubt* that Christ dwells in you by the power & presence of the Holy Spirit in you. This is part of the great mystery! Christ... *in us?* **YES!** Everything needed for salvation is found in Christ. We belong to Christ & will be with Him forever! That means we now have – *hope!*

*the hope of glory*...Hope is that part of faith that focuses on the future. In biblical terms, when faith is directed to the future, we call it *hope*. This is not *wishful thinking*. It is an *assurance*, through faith.

The Greek word for glory is related to *splendor & brilliance*. John says, “glory as of a Father’s only Son, full of grace & truth.” This sparkling glory of deity belongs equally to the Father, Son & Holy Spirit because each shares in the divinity of the Godhead. When we accept Jesus as our Lord & Savior, He floods us with anticipation of assured expectation of His glory. This hope includes power & authority.

If you haven’t felt or experienced *the hope of glory* yet, maybe it’s still a mystery to you! Ask questions! Ask God to reveal Himself *fully* to you. Let it become a heavenly hope chest filled with the riches of glory - glorious riches - for God’s people. He wants everyone to know the mystery is a mystery no longer! Each of us has been given a wonderful gift! Let’s unwrap it completely to receive the glories He’s given us through the life, death & resurrection of His Son!

## **SELAH**

### **RELATED VERSES** (Add other related verses as you think of them.)

Exodus 40:29, He (Moses) set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, & offered on it the burnt offering & the grain offering as the Lord commanded Moses.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19, The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” Then the Lord replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among your own people; I will put My words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in My name, I Myself will hold accountable.

Psalms 25:14, The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear Him, & He makes His covenant known to them.

Jeremiah 33:3, Call to Me & I will answer you, & will tell you great & hidden things that you have not known.

Matthew 13:10-11, Then the disciples came & asked Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” He answered, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.”

Luke 16:16a-b, The law & the prophets were in effect until John came; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed...

John 1:14, And the Word became flesh & lived among us, & we have seen His glory, the glory as of a Father’s only Son, full of grace & truth.

John 14:20, “On that day you will know that I am in My Father, & you in Me, & I in You.”

Romans 8:38-39, For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Romans (portions of) 16:25-27, Now to God who is able to strengthen you...according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, & through prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith – to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

1 Corinthians 2:7, But we speak God’s wisdom, secret & hidden, which God decreed before the ages for *our* glory. (Comprehend “*our*”! It’s huge!)

1 Corinthians 4:1, Think of us (apostles) in this way, as servants of Christ & stewards of God’s mysteries.

Galatians 3:28, There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male & female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 4:19, My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.

Ephesians 1:7-10, In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom & insight He has made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to *gather up* all things in heaven & things on earth.

Ephesians 1:18, So that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance among the saints.

Ephesians 1:22-23, And He (God) has put all things under His (Jesus') feet & has made Him the head over all things for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 3:3-4, And how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ.

Ephesians 6:19-20, Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Colossians 1:20, And through Him (Jesus) God was pleased to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of His (Jesus') cross. (What does it mean by, "in heaven"?)

Colossians 1:21-22, And you who were once estranged & hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, He has now reconciled in His fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy & blameless & irreproachable before Him -

Colossians 2:2-3, I want their hearts to be encouraged & united in love, so that they may have all the riches of understanding & have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom & knowledge.



Colossians 4:3-4, At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the Word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ, for which I am in prison, so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should.

1 Timothy 3:16, Without any doubt, the mystery of our religion is great: He was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.

Hebrews 9:15, For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.

Hebrews 9:26b-28, But as it is, He has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once, & after that the judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him.

## SUMMARY

In the Old Testament, God chose to come & live with the people of Israel. He proved His Presence in the midst of His people by living in the tabernacle & later in the temple. He *revealed* His Presence among the people *only* after a sacrifice was made & reconciliation had taken place. Without reconciliation, God couldn't live among His people, & He *never* lived in the midst of the Gentiles. Now, *all* can be beneficiaries of the "mystery"!

The church is the body of Christ. Jesus fills the church with His life, but He doesn't live there. He lives in the lives of the people who go there. The living Christ dwelling simultaneously in each of us makes us one.

Too many people still know nothing about God's great gift to us through His Son. Too many Christians still know nothing about the revelation of this mystery. You can tell by the look on too many faces that they have not yet comprehended that the glorious secret has now been revealed for them. This revelation brings joy, hope, glory, freedom from sin & death, & life eternal!

Let us not forget that because He is in you, in me, & all believers, believers should *all* experience deep unity, a "tie that binds"! The same Christ is in each of us & living in us, & that makes us one.

## CONCLUSION

Because of Christ's sacrifice for us, He now lives through His Holy Spirit in every believer. God no longer lives in tabernacles, temples or buildings. He lives in His people. How? It's – *a glorious mystery!*

Christ, living in us, is the foundation & cause of every bit of our hope of entering the fullness of divine glory – life with Him throughout eternity! His living in us is the assurance that we will share in the glory that is to come.

When things don't go our way or the devil attacks us or circumstances seem against us, we should ask, "*Who is living in me? Who has made His home in me?*" Rejoice! This is the secret to the assurance & joy of the Christian life. This knowledge makes us "more than conquerors." It is this belief that gives us confidence to share our faith with others so they, too, may learn the "*mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages & generations.*"

Death *will* come, but Jesus conquered death & now lives in us. We'll be with Him forever, see His glory & enjoy everlasting communion with Him. It is *His* righteousness that gives *us* the right to inherit the life He's prepared for us to enjoy with Him in heaven. His Spirit living in us *today* is the first taste we have of His glory for eternity!

Let us grasp this truth! Let us meditate on it & bless & praise His Holy Name! Let us digest it to receive comfort & strength & to appreciate the implications for every aspect of our lives on earth today & throughout eternity!

*"In My Father's house there are many dwelling places.  
If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?  
And if I go & prepare a place for you, I will come again &  
will take you to Myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."  
John 14:2-3*

Let Colossians 1:26-27 be a *LifeLine* for you!

**SCRIPTURE IS OUR –**

***LifeLine!***