

Our spiritual blessings in Christ

Unity in Christ

With the state of the world as it is with the wars between Russia and Ukraine and between Israel and Palestine, segregation and disunity within and between communities, and even within churches, which all cause pain, suffering, and turmoil, the cry of the world is for peace, for a ceasing of conflict, and of unity. However, is unity possible in such a segregated world with sin and pride being the root causes of the segregation and disunity? “Where is God in all this”, is the cry. However, God has never been out of control and has always had a plan, which was kept a mystery

Ephesians 1:8-10 With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment —to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

1) A mystery revealed

- A mystery is something that had been hidden, but is now revealed to God’s people.
- God doesn’t cast His pearls before swine – He doesn’t reveal His will and ways to unbelievers
 - Mark 4:11 He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables.”
 - Colossians 1:25-27 I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
 - God reveals the riches of His mystery to His people, and that mystery is Christ in you (us) and the hope of glory that He brings.
- It is the Holy Spirit who reveals the mystery of God to believers
 - 1 Corinthians 2:7-11 We declare God’s wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” — the things God has prepared for those who love him— these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
 - Only believers have been given the gift of the holy Spirit, as a seal of their redemption, so it is only to believers that the Holy Spirit reveals the mystery of God
- Jesus is the mystery of godliness that was revealed to mankind
 - 1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

2) God does everything in His chosen time

- God isn’t in a rush to fulfill His plans and purposes whether for the universe, the world, or us personally
 - He does everything according to his chosen time
 - Ecclesiastes 3:1 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.
- Jesus came at the God-given time
 - Galatians 4:4-5 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.
- God will also unify everything under Christ in His God given time
 - Ephesians 1:9-10 He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment —to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

- We need to understand that the fulness of times mentioned in Galatians about the first coming of Jesus isn't the same as the fulness of time in Ephesians that still lies in the future – at the second coming of Jesus under His authority and headship
 - God doesn't bring everything to fulfillment at the same time, but has a fulness of time for each and every aspect of His divine plan
- Jesus will be coming back again at His appointed time, which is still a mystery to believers when that will be
 - Mark 13:32-33 "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.
- Many people mock the prophecies of Jesus' second coming because they haven't understood that He will come at the right time
 - 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

3) Unity in Christ

- It is at this time, when He comes to rule in His kingdom, that everything will be subject to Him and will be united under Him
- This has always been His predestined purpose from before the creation of the world
 - His bringing together all things means that this is the culmination of His plan of redemption as separation and segregation came about through sin
- His intention is that all walls of hostility start being broken down now, through the cross
 - Ephesians 2:14-18 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.
- God has given us gifts in the church for the intention of us being united
 - Ephesians 4:11-13 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.
- And that unity is under the headship of Christ
- Every person who works against unity and brings strife in any way is working against the purposes of God
- Where there's a break in relationship, humble yourself under the headship of Jesus and go and be reconciled to the person as far as it counts on you to do so
- Unity brings peace in our lives. Strife and division bring anger, resentment and bitterness