

Mystery4

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[0 : 00] The middle of the message this morning is mystery and its content. In preparation for that, I'd like you to please turn to the book of Ephesians.

And in the book of Ephesians, we will be looking at chapter 1, verses 1 through 10.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before him.

[1 : 19] In love, he predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the kind intention of his will.

To the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the beloved. In him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished on us.

In all wisdom and insight, he made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his kind intention, which he purposed in him, with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. I think of that as a kind of end game that God has in mind when he says, to the end, and in verse 12, and with a view to in verse 10.

In other words, that's where these things are going. And we are right now in the throes of what is referred to as the administration of the grace of God.

[3 : 09] And it is in direct contrast to the administration of law, which God put in place through the prophet Moses.

And it is through the administration or the dispensation of the grace of God that he has put that in place through what we might call a New Testament Moses by the name of Paul, the apostle. We discussed this somewhat at the nine o'clock hour, and there is going to be some repetition that will be inevitable between the nine o'clock hour and this 10-15 hour because of the subject matter and the very idea of prophecy and prayer and mystery and prayer are two entirely different regimes, I guess we would say.

And we are functioning under one and we are not functioning under the other. And yet when you try to function under the one for which you were not intended, you're going to confront all kinds of disappointment and inconsistencies.

And that's why we're engaging this very material that we just recently got underway, and it is called Prophecy and Mystery. So to just repeat what I said for the nine o'clock hour, I want to read it again.

[4 : 31] And as I mentioned, there's going to be some repetition. I'm not apologizing for it at all because I see it as a necessity to learning, and it is so absolutely critical that we get these concepts we are now discussing in mind and a firm handle on them for the simple reason that they are not only life-changing, but they will serve you well for the rest of your life.

That's how important it is, and I am not exaggerating. In the bulletin, it is stated, the question is sometimes asked about the practicality of right division.

This stuff we're talking about, prophecy and mystery, is that some kind of an add-on or is that really essential? Well, does it actually make a difference whether we see the distinctions the Bible makes?

After all, it is all the Word of God. Why don't we just take it as a whole and forget about this thing called right division? In this fifth session today that relates to prophecy and its content, number five,

we will get a glimpse of the practical importance of right division and the subject of prayer, and that we talked about at the nine o'clock hour.

Are we suggesting, do we mean even this, even the subject of prayer, is subject to right division? It most definitely is.

[6 : 06] Only by this can we understand why so many prayers are amiss and unanswered. And the follow-up to this will be covered in today's morning worship service that follows at 1015, and that is what we are engaged in even now.

And with your Bibles open, and I trust you still have them open there, and you are looking at Ephesians chapter 1, we just want to point out a couple of things from the passage, and then we'll be opening it for some Q&A; a little bit later.

One of the points that was made at the nine o'clock hour, and you will be hearing me make it again and again and again, because I not only want to make it so you will remember it, I want to make it so you won't be able to forget it.

And there is a difference. Prophecy and mystery. Prophecy, and I'm not talking about the prediction of the future, although that is involved, but we are talking about a portion of the scripture that is devoted to the prophecy aspect of humanity, and it focuses primarily upon the Jew and the nation of Israel, and it has to do with the promise of the coming kingdom.

This is the same kingdom of which Jesus spoke, and John the Baptist spoke when they said, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It is not heaven where God dwells.

[7 : 42] It is here on earth, and it means that God's heaven over which he has rule and reign on earth in heaven will come to earth, and the prayer that is so frequently referred to in what is called the Lord's Prayer is a prayer for that very thing.

It is a prayer for the kingdom of heaven to come. Thy kingdom come so that thy will will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and if you have not discovered it yet, that is not a reality.

The will of God is not being done on earth as it is in heaven, but when it is, then the planet will get fixed. Then the corruption will be done away with.

Then things will be as they ought to be. Jesus Christ will be ruling and reigning with a rod of iron, and all of the corruption and the evil and the sin and the things that we deal with on a daily basis are going to be cared for.

They're going to be eliminated. righteousness will prevail throughout the earth. That's what the prayer is for. That's the longing of the human heart. It is for the restoration of the earth back to the state that it enjoyed before sin messed up everything, and we are dealing with the consequences of sin right now.

[9 : 17] So this kingdom of heaven thing is a major subject of prophecy, prophecy, and when we are talking about prophecy and mystery, it involves the nation Israel primarily, the Jewish people, whether they are cooperative or not.

Sometimes they have been, sometimes they haven't been. Right now, they're set aside in unbelief, but the focus is upon Israel and the one whom Israel will produce, and that, of course, is the Messiah who's going to make all this happen.

That is Jesus, the Messiah. We all know that Israel rejected their Messiah, and as a result, the nation Israel is set aside, and the time will come when they are taken and put back on center stage, and God will finish the business that he started with Israel, and the kingdom of heaven will come to earth, and so on.

But this is not it. This is an entirely different time that was never prophesied in Scripture at all. You go through the Old Testament and you get all kinds of references and prophecies to the kingdom coming, to the millennium, to the redeemer, to redemption, to the earth getting fixed, and all the prophets talk about this, and they talk about the prophet, the Messiah, the one who is to come, who is to affect all of that.

That's the burden of prophecy. That's what it's all about. It is restoration, redemption, the revival of the earth, the fixing of everything, and it still isn't fixed.

[10 : 48] So what is it that's going on now? What's going on now is something totally different. Actually has nothing whatever to do with the subject that the Old Testament focuses on, which is the kingdom, which is prophecy.

What is going on now is what Gary was reading about in Ephesians chapter 1, and I want you to look back at it, if you will, because it has to do with the mystery.

Well, what in the world is that all about? If you want a good synonym that better explains what this mystery is, I would suggest that you consider using the word, which many Bible teachers have proposed, instead of mystery, call it secret, because that's exactly what it is.

It's a secret. It is a secret that was kept in the mind and heart of God for thousands of years and never revealed. Nobody had a clue.

The Bible never said anything about it, never predicted it, never prophesied it, never promised it, never mentioned it. And then all of a sudden, here it is, just like a bolt out of the blue.

[12:08] What is this? This mystery is called the church. It is the body of Christ. It is a spiritual body comprised of all believers who have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

They comprise this spiritual body and Christ is the spiritual head. And the emphasis is on the spiritual. Now, how does that differ from the covenants, from the Old Testament, from the kingdom, from the earth?

How does that differ? As radically as it can possibly be. It is so different. And the extension, the extent of this difference that we saw, particularly in the hour that preceded this, is the fact that in the Old Testament, under the prophecy, everything, and I mean everything, is physical, material, concrete.

It's a physical nation, Israel. They are promised physical real estate, the land of Israel. And even after death, in the kingdom that is eventually that which they are going to inhabit, it's going to be here on earth.

And John tells us in his prophetic teachings that he beheld the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven and it's coming to earth and it will be situated on earth.

[13:37] And it is 1,500 miles long, 1,500 miles wide, 1,500, it's a 1,500 mile cube. We can't imagine the concept of that.

And that's physical. Where are we now? Now we are in the spiritual. How does that differ?

Radically. What are we talking about with the physical? We're talking about the physical is the land, physicality, and how was it demonstrated?

How was it set forth? In miracles. And what is it that miracles have in common? They're all physical. They're all material. All miracles deal with the human body, either the healing of it, the blindness, the deafness, the lame, raised from the dead, whatever.

It's all physical. It's all material. And it goes right in sync with what Israel is all about. They are a people of the earth.

[14:45] And their promises are earthly, materialistic. All of the miracles Jesus performed had to do with the physical. Whether it was the stilling of the storm and the waves or whatever, there was always physicality involved.

And these are things that you can see. And that's what people really grab onto. Because we are tactile individuals.

We like to feel things. We are vision. We like to see things. We like to hear things. And that all has to do with the physical. But the mystery is completely different.

And it is portrayed in this letter that Paul wrote to the Ephesians as well as Colossians. And perhaps one of the greatest distinctions that we see here is between materiality and immateriality. And I don't want to say this in any derogatory way because I don't mean it that way. But there is a progressive revelation that is involved whereby the physical and the material and the miraculous that we tend to place so much emphasis upon is elemental stuff.

[16:11] Most of us in our thinking would put it at the peak. We'd put it at the top. That isn't where God puts it. Materiality, physicality, the miracles and all that had to do with the miracles.

The things that you could witness and see and touch. This is all elemental stuff. It is all kindergarten stuff.

It is that which is designed to get our attention and focus on. But it is very, what shall I say, it is unable to deliver what really needs to be delivered.

Now let me explain what I mean by that. You cannot find a people on the face of the earth who had the benefit of so many miraculous manifestations as the nation of Israel.

It starts right off in Genesis with one miracle after another with the children of Israel coming out of Egypt with the plagues that were provided by God on the Egyptians with the crossing of the Red Sea with the water out of the rock with the manna from heaven.

[17 : 33] All of those things were physical, material, hands-on stuff and they were designed to authenticate the reality of the God who said he was in charge of the Israelites and was looking out for them.

And if you will obey me and if you will follow me I will be your God and you will be my people and I'll take care of you and I'll give you a pillar of fire by night to warm you and I'll give you a cloud by day to protect you from the heat and I'll give you water out of the rock to drink and I'll give you manna from heaven to eat.

All designed for one basic thing to validate the claims of this creator God on behalf of the people that he had chosen.

Now my question is how well did that work out? Do you see something brewing here?

Do you see something that despite all of these miraculous deliverances and provisions what was the besetting sin of the Israelites?

[18 : 56] Idolatry for crying out loud. The worship of other gods, false gods, phony gods, having eyes they see not and ears they hear not.

They are just the figments of men's imagination and Paul says what is really behind them all is nothing but demons and the people don't even realize it. So one would think that all of these miraculous manifestations that these people could see with their eyes wow look at that you see what God you would think that that would have instilled in them a rock solid confidence and obedience and trust and worship of the one true God why didn't it?

Now think about that why didn't it? How could it be? And we're still talking prophecy even though we are in what is commonly called the New Testament we are in the four Gospels Jesus of Nazareth is on the scene son says mama I don't know what they're going to do this is terribly embarrassing got all of these guests here the bride and the groom everybody celebrating and horror of horrors they run out of wine they run out of wine and Jesus said what what what is that to me what do I have to do with that that's not my department and obviously she prevailed upon him to come to the rescue and his first miracle was changing the water into wine you know there's no indication that anybody probably other than his mother actually knew what had happened because the host the fellow who was in charge of the banquet all he knew was when he tasted wow this is really good wine you know what most people do is they they serve the good wine at the beginning and then when people have had quite a bit to drink then they bring in the cheap stuff and they won't notice the difference you know but this is really different this is the best wine

I've ever tasted well of course it was the wine that Jesus made from the water and that was only the beginning one after another there would be lepers 10 lepers do you have any idea what leprosy is like where this incredible virus invades the human tissue and your fingers start to fall off and your nose begins to shrivel and become inflamed and your nose may even drop off there were 10 of these people and wherever they went they had these big clap boards and they would go out in crowds and when they would come into a town they would clap these big boards like a couple of big ping pong paddles they would clap them together to warn everybody that they were coming they would clap these and say unclean unclean unclean and everybody would part company and lose themselves didn't want to get around these people they would they would they would

Jesus heal them nobody heals anybody from leprosy just isn't done nobody raises someone from the dead like Jairus' daughter no one does that but Jesus did that and many people were absolutely enthralled and rightly so I mean good grief how often do you see something like this never never he gives sight to the blind I know so and so he's been blind for years can't see blind as a bat and now he's walking around seeing he's got great vision Jesus of Nazareth did that now for some people and I would just say this for some people who have a right disposition to begin with they were not only enamored with what Jesus did they were sold on him they were convinced and one was named

[23 : 48] Nicodemus he wasn't what you would call a commoner he was from the upper crust but Nicodemus said we know that you have to be a man come from God for no miracle no one can do these miracles that you do unless God is with him there were a number of people but what about what about the Pharisees the other Pharisees what about the scribes what about the Sadducees they flatly rejected Jesus miracles let me ask you something how could they do that how could they just reject the testimony of all those people even if you weren't there and saw these miracles there were plenty of people who did why didn't they succeed in convincing the powers that be Jesus of Nazareth is the real deal but they couldn't how can they possibly deny who he was and why he

came in light of what he did how could they do that

I'm going to suggest something is the only conclusion the only the only conclusion that I can come to and it is not very nice not very pleasant to think about because in my estimation it represents the epitome the depths of the capability of the evil of the human heart and when I realize that capacity that is there and you know something the potential for it lurks in every one of us we would like to think that it's true only of the rift wrath but we're here at Grace Bible Church and we're too nice for something like that no you're not no you're not because you and I are made of the same stuff that everybody else is and the fact that we may not go to the lengths that some of them go to demonstrate the evil doesn't mean that the potential for doing so is not in us because it is what I am saying is the fallen nature of the believer is just as ugly as the fallen nature of the unbeliever and these people these people had a problem that outweighed the problem of evidence it wasn't that they had no reason to believe or to not believe but it's because they chose not to believe this is what the Bible calls the hardening of the heart so that evidence and the amount of evidence doesn't make any difference the mind is made up and bolted shut and that's where these people were coming from that's how they could say crucify him crucify him and even

Pontius Pilate said why what evil has he done I find nothing in him that is worthy of death and they would not be assuaged and he finally gave in to them how can you account for their unbelief in the face of all of the miracles that Christ performed the lepers that he cleansed the sight that he gave to the blind opened the ears of the deaf raised the dead to you and to me perhaps we look at that and we say that's just inconceivable that they could deny that kind of evidence and all I'm saying is it is a demonstration of the depths of the human heart that is committed to unbelief it is the fact of the self centeredness that besets every one of us as a result of the fall this is ugly stuff we're talking about but this is what it's made of this is what humanity is made of and it isn't pretty and this is why Jesus came and why he died even while we were yet sinners Christ died for us died for the likes of that that's what makes his love so absolutely amazing so what we're getting into here in Ephesians I want you to look at this Ephesians chapter 1 where Paul says in verse 3 blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ and the question is what are they what are these spiritual blessings we don't have any problem understanding physical blessings they're material physical blessings are health wealth opportunity provision all kinds of wonderful things those are physical blessings we're all familiar with them and we all enjoy them but what in the world are spiritual blessings physical blessings are tangible material hands-on stuff money dollars and cents home to live in job to go to a mate to love children to love and rear these are all physical material things and they're all physical blessings and they're all great and we all enjoy them and we all want more and more of them but they pale in comparison to another provision that God has made that we very often give little or no attention to at all and what

Paul is saying is listen this is what matters the physical the material oh that's great that's wonderful that's a provision of God but he's got something even better for you are you interested wow okay so what are these spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ well the very first one is he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world now I know this is a verse and I've been on both sides of these verses when it comes to Calvinism and anti-Calvinism and pro-Calvinism and all the rest of it and I am somewhat embarrassed sometimes by my ability to change my positions on these but when I discover that I feel that I've really been wrong in misinterpreting the scriptures I need to make a correction not only for me but for you and that's why I did a series some years ago where I explained the position that I held previously and why I changed but these spiritual blessings here they are incredible and listen these are things that are immaterial but they are eternal the physical and the material is great and we enjoy it but when you draw your last breath they're gone they're gone they're never intended to be eternal these that Paul is talking about here are eternal and they are immaterial but here's the thing and this is what is so hard so hard for us to grasp the spiritual and the immaterial are just as very real as is the physical but it's hard for us to grasp that because the physical is so much with us the physical we can see we can touch it we can feel it we can have it we can hold it you can't do that with the spiritual it's immaterial oh where where where is it what what it is just as objectively real and true as is the solid reality of this pulpit but are we convinced of that well that's something that each of us will have to answer for ourselves he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ now notice that Christ is of course the vehicle the channel through which it comes chose us in him before the foundation of the

world how did he do that

[33 : 01] I think and my answer perhaps is very simplistic I'm sure that my Calvinist friends would consider it very simplistic but Jesus is referred to Jesus the Christ is referred to as the anointed one the word Messiah in Hebrew is Mashiach Yeshua Ha Mashiach Jesus the Messiah and the word Messiah in Hebrew means the anointed one it means the chosen one the selected one the elected one that's what and who Jesus is the Messiah Jesus the Messiah he is Jesus the chosen selected anointed one and if you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ you are chosen selected and anointed you share in his chosenness his chosenness and you being in him makes you chosen which is a glorious thing because this is the way

God views it and most of us can grasp the idea I think at least maybe it's a little difficult if you haven't heard it before but there's an old spiritual that the slaves used to sing down south that reflected this idea and it says were you there were you there when they crucified my Lord what does that mean of course I wasn't there Jesus was crucified 2000 years ago I wasn't even thought of what does that mean was I there were you there when they laid him in the grave were you there when he rose up from the dead no of course not oh yes you were if you are in Christ you were on that cross with him that's what the hymn writer meant when he says were you there when they crucified my Lord yes

I was there how can that be spiritually I was there oh well yeah but that's not real oh yes it is it is real because God says it's real and God looks at it as real and just because we see the spiritual as some kind of ephemeral thing that you cannot put your eyes on and you cannot put your hands on that it doesn't have any reality but it does God says it does and when Jesus died on that cross you were there you died with him you paid the penalty for sin with him and you were buried with him and bless God you were raised from the dead with him and not only that you are seated with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus now I know if you want to look at this in a very elemental way you were seated in a seat here in Grace

Bible Church in Springfield Ohio but as far as God is concerned you're already enthroned with Christ in the heavenlies that's the way God views it it's not the way we view it but that's the way God views it now which do you think is the more real yeah I do too the way he views it the way he views this this is when for the foundation of the world after all he was the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world and we are in him and he predestined us to adoption as sons that's incredible adoption as sons what does that mean well we have adoption laws here and all over the world I guess they have adoption laws in other places but we adopt babies we adopt children we don't adopt adults but then we're not

God and if you are 80 years old and you come to faith in Jesus Christ as your personal savior guess what you are an adopted child of God well how can that be we're looking at this from God's point of view you see God has a perspective that we don't have and it's silly to think that we could limit him to our perspective and this is the big problem that a lot of people have with God and his attributes is that he doesn't comply with what they think he ought to be and what he ought to do so God doesn't comply with what we think and what we think he ought to do who is it that's wrong well it's God of course because we couldn't be wrong now that's that's just the human arrogance speaking but this is the way a lot of people think

[38 : 37] God has to be reasonable and do things my way and then I'll agree to go along with him but do you know God isn't the least bit interested in doing anything your way he has his own way and it is amazing it is well predestined to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to the praise of his glory of his grace which he freely bestowed on us he didn't sprinkle it on us some texts render it he lavished it on us he just slathered his grace upon us incredible and you know what the slathering of this grace isn't messy when we think things tend to think of things being slathered on something we think of making a mess of something or overflow or over right no

God well freely bestowed on us and in verse seven we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of our trespasses how many of them what about the biggies Colossians tells us that we are forgiven all trespasses by the way there is a little verse that is tucked away in the sermon on the mount and I'm sure you're probably familiar with it and I want you to think long and hard about this because we'll deal with it next week the Lord willing Jesus said in the sermon on the mount for if you forgive men their trespasses God will also forgive you but if you forgive not men neither neither will your heavenly father forgive you what do you do about that what do you do with that is forgiveness conditioned upon our forgiveness well there it is in

Matthew 5 says that how does that square with this that we just read in Ephesians and in Colossians about being forgiven all trespasses don't you see a problem there of course you do how are you going to make those jibe you can't and I say that as one who spent a lot of time trying you can't make them mesh they don't mesh because they're not supposed to mesh what they do is they clash because they are coming from two different entities one is prophecy and one is mystery and under mystery we have these incredible spiritual blessings one of which is God has forgiven you all trespasses past present and future that's one of the spiritual blessings and listen that spiritual blessing did not exist when

Jesus was here on the earth nope did not for good did not exist what brought it about it made it possible was the cross when Christ died on that cross that changed everything that was the game changer and the veil in the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom God was saying done with this it's time to bring on something entirely different and that's exactly what he did and that's called the mystery and Paul in chapter three really explains in more detail than what we've gone to here he made known to us verse nine the mystery of his will according to his kind intention which he purposed in him that is in Christ with a view to an administration some translations render a dispensation I prefer what we've got here in the new

American with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of times that is the summing up of all things in Christ things in the heavens and we've obtained an inheritance didn't have that before we become inheritors we inherit we are a joint heir of Christ we are heirs of God and a joint heir of Christ nobody could say that before this is mystery stuff this didn't exist under the law of Moses and as Moses was the chief administrator for the law under which Israel lived and by the way no one else did because no one else was supposed to no one else was expected to no one else was ever given the law of Moses only the Jew and that law was administered the chief administrator the guy in charge of doling it out

[44 : 27] God delegated to Moses and I don't think there's anybody I've never heard anybody dispute that well there was a time you know when his sister Miriam and his brother Aaron got really upset about that and they had a bone to pick with Moses and their position was well has God spoken only to Moses is Moses the big cheese is he the only one that's got a word from God what makes him the authority anyway and you read on the text there in Exodus and God smote them with leprosy now that would get your attention and it did he did not appreciate their rebelling against his singular instituted authority of

Moses and God went to bat for Moses and his own sister who by the way was older Moses had a big sister and I don't know how old Aaron was but he was probably older too but Moses was the one whom God chose and you know in the very same way God chose Paul the apostle to be the chief administrator of this thing called the mystery the body of Christ and it was a whole new thing in fact it upset everything caused all kinds of conflict problems you read the book of Acts it is so filled with violence with attempts on Paul's life they tried to do him in he experienced all kinds of deprivation and difficulty and by the way and with this

I want to close but I want to give you something to think about when God called Saul of Tarsus least likely person on the face of the earth to do this thing that he's calling him to do he sent Ananias a completely different not to be confused with Ananias I want you to go to the house called Street on the street and find the house of Judas and this Judas had nothing to do with Judas Iscariot completely different Judas and you find a man there inquire about a man there by the name of Saul of Tarsus and Ananias is reluctant and he says Saul of Tarsus we talking about the same guy here I know this fellow are you sure about this and the

Lord says you know you go your way I got the right guy got the right guy you go your way and then he says this this is one of the most stunning things I I ever read in the Bible he says I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name well how do you like that God is choosing this one to be the administrator of a whole new thing that is going to create a lot of confusion and a lot of rejection and a lot of misunderstanding and it is going to cost the one who is propagating this eventually it's going to cost him his life in the meanwhile he's going to be beaten within an inch of his life he's going to be mistreated he's going to spend the night and the day in the water he's going to be in prison he's going to be incredibly mistreated abused persecuted and the chief persecutor is going to become one who is the recipient of chief persecution and now is that any way to call somebody that you want to do a job for you and that's exactly what he did and he says

I'm going to call you to be the revelator the administrator of this totally new thing called the mystery which is the body of Christ which is never prophesied in the Old Testament never even hinted at no one had a clue and all at once out of the blue God is saying the Jew that has always been separated and the Gentile that has always been idolatrous and pagan going to be brought together and made into one new man and it will be called the body of Christ oh yes Jesus will be the spiritual head wow this is amazing stuff can't wait to get into it like I said we haven't scratched the surface but we have scratched the scratch and the best is yet to come I can't wait to do this is one of those sessions where we need three hours but we don't have them so let me do this rather than take any additional time for Q questions that people are reluctant to ask because they know we're short on time

[50 : 26] I've given you something to think about and I would appreciate it if you would jot down any questions that you have and if you want to drop them in the offering box you can put your name on them or you can leave your name off doesn't make any difference to me and I will do my best to give you a good answer or you can ask your questions next week because next Sunday we will open it with Q&A; based on what we've talked about this morning so you'll have opportunity to ask any questions that you may want to we are in for some really exciting stuff because I just want you to think about this as I conclude we tend to become so enamored and so fixated on the physical and this is evidenced in the way we treat our bodies and the way we care for them and the food we eat and the medicine we take and the operations we undergo and all the rest of it and I'm not saying these are bad things because they're not they're things that God has provided and we need to be responsible and care for them but at the same time we can focus so much time effort and energy upon these physical bodies and our physical homes and our physical cars and our physical everything that we pay precious little attention to that which is really going to endure for eternity and it won't be your car your house your boat or any of those things it'll be the spiritual can we focus on that can we learn to discipline ourselves to focus on the things that really really matter that's a question think about it this week if you would please and pray with me our father we recognize that we've probably generated more questions than what we've answered and we're well aware that there are things that we have spoken of that we certainly don't begin to understand as fully and as well as we'd like but we do see this great dichotomy that you created in scripture that there is a basic physical earthly elementary kindergarten kind of life for humanity compared to an upper strata of the spiritual that is eternal that has to do with that which is reserved in heaven and fades not away it's reserved there for us we look forward to the reality of that one day that here and now is just something that we have difficulty grasping we trust that as we engage this series you will make it more understandable so that we can better appreciate it because you have given us so much in and through

Christ we do not want to lack any diligence in trying to understand and appreciate it thank you so much for what you've been pleased to reveal and for each of these people as they go their way may these thoughts and things germinate in our minds and bring forth fruit we pray in Christ's name Amen Amen