

The Two Great Mysteries

by Zac Poonen

This sermon delves into the deep truths found in Genesis 1, 2, and 3, highlighting the restoration work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God in remaking the corrupt earth, paralleling it to the restoration work God does in our lives. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the two great mysteries in the Bible: the mystery of godliness, focusing on personal holiness and overcoming sin, and the mystery of Christ and the church, emphasizing unity and cooperation within the body of believers. The sermon challenges individuals to seek transformation through the Holy Spirit and to be part of a vibrant church family that reflects the beauty of Christ's bride.

Scripture: Genesis 1:2, Genesis 2:18, John 14:16, Philippians 3:18, Philippians 3:20

Topics: "Restoration", "Unity in the Body of Christ"

Description

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Transcript

Welcome everyone. There is a word found, you know there are many words found in the New Testament which are not found in the Old Testament and that's because in the New Testament God has given us the Holy Spirit and to dwell in us, to give us revelation on God's ways and especially to help us to understand God's heart. When I read the Bible nowadays I say Lord I want to look into your heart and see what what is in your heart.

Many people study the Bible to get knowledge. It doesn't help us spiritually. God wants us to see his heart and that can only be possible through the Holy Spirit.

So one of the words that occurs in the New Testament which is never found in the Old Testament is the word mystery. Jesus told his disciples it's given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The word mystery comes a number of times, even the mystery of iniquity, the deception of the Antichrist is called in 2nd Thessalonians to the mystery of iniquity.

Mystery means something which you cannot understand without revelation of the Holy Spirit. It's a secret that God will reveal through the Holy Spirit. It cannot be understood by study or analysis or any such thing and Psalm 25 says the secret of the Lord is with those who fear him.

So the more you reverence God and fear him your level of intelligence IQ makes no difference. It's the fear of God that determines whether you will understand this mystery. I've seen through the years I mean I've been preaching these truths for 42 years now and I've discovered that many people who hear and hear and hear and hear don't seem to understand the mystery even after 40 years and there are others who just hear it in one year and they got it.

It's got to do with humility. See there's a pride in all of us which sometimes we don't recognize. Pride for various things.

Pride of our looks or intelligence or race or accomplishments or Bible knowledge or anything and pride is something that's so foreign to God that we'll never understand what he has to say to us if we don't get rid of it in our life and whenever we discover it we must judge ourselves repent and cleanse ourselves of it if we want to really get close to God. I want to show you a passage of Scripture first of all to begin in John chapter 13. You know this is the place where Jesus was washing the disciples feet.

It's very interesting to see that that is the last thing that he did before he went to the cross. Jesus life was one where he came all the way from heaven and finally descended right to the feet of man. That's not usually the way many Christian leaders go.

Many Christian leaders in the early days of their Christian life they start at the bottom and go all the way up till they become a director or a chairman or president of something. Jesus went exactly the other way and if you're a disciple of Jesus that's the way you'll want to go. That's what I pray for myself Lord the last day of my earthly life.

I want to be found at the feet of your disciples washing their feet. That's what I want to do. That's the direction I want to go all my life and be found there on the last day of my earthly life because that's the way my Savior went.

So after he washed their feet he said something to them which I want you to notice. I want you to connect it with. See the washing the feet is in certainly in Eastern culture it's it's a job of no dignified person would do it.

It's the job of slaves and in the homes in the rich homes in Israel they'd have a bucket of water near the door and there'd be a slave to wash the feet. But because Jesus said that in this last supper that he was arranging he didn't want anybody around that's why the owner of that house kept a bucket of water but no slave. I'm sure he had slaves in his house but Jesus had said nobody must be there in the room and so the bucket of water was there but it was nobody to wash the disciples feet.

You know they all wore sandals and one of the things that you when you walk through dusty roads your feet are dirty and that's why they keep a bucket of water and the slave to wash it as soon as you enter. So since there was no slave and the disciples looked around and wondered who's gonna do it. Jesus said I'm the one.

I'm the slave here by the way. I'm here to wash your feet and then he showed us his humility from birth to the end of his life. He was born in a cow shed kept in a manger.

I don't think there's any human being who's ever born in such a situation. I've seen poor people in India and I've never heard of a poor person whose children were born in a cow shed. He took the lowest place at birth and all the way to his last time with his disciples he was the disciples feet and finally he hung on a criminal's cross and there I see the way Jesus went and if you're gripped by that and you say Lord that's the way I want to go all my life.

The things of God will open up to you. Your eyes will be open to see things that no other human being can understand. The Bible says God has revealed many things to us through his Holy Spirit.

So after Jesus did this and manifested his humility he says this you know the Philip came to Jesus and said and it's all in the same section John 14 verse 8 which is still at the Last Supper. Lord show us the Father. John 14 verse 8 and Jesus said in the last part of verse 9 if you've seen me the middle of verse 9 you've seen the Father.

Do you know what God the Father is like? He comes to wash our feet. That's how Jesus was and that's how God the Father is like. He's no different and I believe when we one day when Christ comes back and we see God face to face the Father we'll find he's exactly like Jesus was.

A total humility. That's why the devil was the head of the angels was driven out of God's presence. No pride can stand in God's presence and that's why as soon as that pride arose in the heart of that chief angel he was expelled from God's presence forever.

If we can remember that my dear brothers and sisters you will understand what it is that can draw you close to the Lord and what it is that'll make God keep you far away from him. It's humility if you want to understand it. So if you've seen me and said you've seen the Father do you see me washing your feet? That's what the Father is like.

He's no different. If you've seen me you've seen the Father. So I want to be like that.

In 1 Corinthians in chapter 2 here's a verse quoted from the Old Testament. This is a quotation 1 Corinthians 2 9 from Isaiah 64 and verse 4 it says in 1 Corinthians 2 9 the things which eye has not seen nor has ear heard and which have not entered into the heart of man God is prepared for those who love him. Think of that which human eyes are not able to see and human ears are not able to hear and which a human heart cannot understand.

There are amazing things that God has prepared for those who love him. That's where it stopped in the Old Testament Isaiah 64 verse 4 stops there but in the New Testament it goes on to say in verse 10 but God has revealed them to us through the Holy Spirit. That's new covenant.

They could not know it in the Old Covenant but now we can. Now I can know the things which are hidden from the clever and the intelligent. God has revealed them to us by his Spirit because the Spirit searches the depths of God and then reveals them to us.

It's amazing. You know there's a verse which says Jesus said that the prophets and Paul long to hear some of the things you hear he told his disciples. We're amazingly privileged people and I want to say to you my dear brothers and sisters if you study the Bible like the Old Testament scribes did, like the way they teach in Bible schools today, you'll never know God.

You'll have a lot of information about Greek and Hebrew and root meanings of this that and the other but you won't know God. You'll have enough material to preach sermons but you won't know God. You won't live the life God wants you to live.

You will not fulfill the ministry God wants you to fulfill because that comes through knowing God and for that you've got to be humble. One more verse in Matthew chapter 11, Matthew 11 verse 25. It's interesting that Jesus thanked the Father for certain things and one of the things he thanked the Father was that God had hidden truths from clever intelligent people.

Have you read that? Matthew 11 25. I praise you Lord of heaven and earth Father I praise you that you have not allowed clever intelligent people to understand these things. Have you ever thought of that? I have praised God with all my heart that the truths of the Bible God has hidden from clever intelligent people but revealed them to be.

The word revealed is a New Testament word also. You never read in the Old Testament about revelation. In the Old Testament you read about understanding, study.

It produces scribes. Revelation produces disciples. There's a world of difference between a scribe and a disciple.

A scribe is a Bible scholar, a great preacher. The disciple is one who follows Jesus who knows God personally. So why I mean why does God do that? You remember another place where Jesus said it's so difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter God's kingdom. It looks as if Jesus said it's very difficult for rich people and clever people and intelligent people to have the things of God. What shall we do if we are clever and intelligent? I mean that's not something we create.

We are born with it. It's like the color of our skin. You cannot change the color of your skin.

You were born with it and intelligence is something like that. What if you were born with a high IQ? Does that mean I can't know the things of God? That's what disturbed me. I said Lord I'm not stupid.

I don't want to pretend I'm stupid. I'm pretty clever and I've got some amount of intelligence. Are you gonna hide things from me? Or if some of us are born or have inherited wealth or have accumulated wealth through faithfully working in a profession or business, what should we do about that? Does that mean I cannot enter God's kingdom? And I discovered that what Jesus was saying was that you see usually clever intelligent people are proud of their cleverness and intelligence.

Have you noticed that? In very subtle ways sometimes we look down on someone who can't understand something that we can understand. Inwardly we say oh that guy is dumb. Have you ever had that attitude towards someone? That guy is dumb.

He can't understand this joke which we all laughed at but he's still wondering what it meant. See that attitude is due to pride and you don't realize it's that pride that prevents God from revealing things to you. And it's very subtle.

It comes in very subtle ways. It's not our cleverness or intelligence. That's what's helped me.

The Lord showed me that your cleverness and intelligence will not hinder you from knowing or getting revelation on truth provided you're not proud of it. If you recognize what have you got which you did not receive. 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 7 says what have you got which you did not receive? What have you got? Do you have good looks? Are you proud of that? It can hinder you.

You don't have to get rid of your good looks but don't be proud of it. You don't have to get rid of your intelligence but don't be proud of it. You don't have to get rid of your wealth but don't be proud of it.

That's what makes it easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for this rich man to enter God's kingdom. So here again he said but he has revealed it to babes, infants. What is it that infants have, newborn infants? What do they have which clever, intelligent people don't have? Humility.

Jesus didn't even pick a ten-year-old boy. He picked a little baby and said the kingdom of heaven is like this until you unless you humble yourself like this little child, this little baby. You cannot enter God's kingdom.

A lot of people who think they've entered God's kingdom are just fooling themselves. They got a religion. Maybe they got an evangelical version of Christianity but they haven't possessed the kingdom of God.

They don't live as those who have inherited the kingdom. Their lives, their home lives and their professional lives, they don't manifest themselves as princes in the kingdom of God and that's because this is the reason. Pride.

It's only those who are humble like a little child who can possess that kingdom. So humility is what the child has. Humility is a sort of a helpless, you know, there are so many ways we can fool ourselves if we are humble.

The external manifestations of humility are deception. It's an attitude. Humility is an attitude and the child has got a very humble humility seen in its helpless dependence on its parents.

I can't do anything. Think of that little baby, a few days old, lying in the cradle. It's saying, I can't do anything.

I need my mom and dad to take care of me. Anything. I can't do a single thing.

I'm dependent on my mom and dad for everything. My brothers and sisters, that is humility. You keep that attitude towards God and I tell you in Jesus' name, I'll tell you, you will get such amazing revelations from Scripture that all the great scholars can't get.

And don't think you get it just by hearing me. I can share with you some of the things God taught me, but you'll have it in your head. It still won't be revelation.

I very often taught in our own church where I've taught for 42 years now. I said, dear brothers and sisters, don't think you understood it just because your clever mind has grasped what I said. Ask God to give you revelation in your heart.

That will change your life. Otherwise, you just have a nice thought that you can preach to somebody else and get some honor. It's worth nothing.

It's garbage until it becomes revelation. And for that, you've got to have humility and a helpless dependence upon God. I see these two pictures of humility.

One is the baby. Jesus picked up a baby and said, you got to humble yourself like a little child. He's the greatest in God's kingdom.

Helpless dependence. And the other picture Jesus gave was of the branch in the tree. Remember John 15 verse 5? As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, you can do nothing without me.

Is that really true? Yes. You can do nothing of eternal value without me. You can do a lot of things that are value on this earth.

Sure. We're all smart, capable, but you'll never be able to do anything of eternal value unless you have this helpless, the attitude of the branch which is in the tree. And if it's been in the tree for 50 years producing apples, it still says, I'm sorry, I can't produce a single apple even with 50 years of experience.

The moment I'm detached from the tree, I'm finished. That is the only attitude that produces eternal fruit. Nothing else.

And once God has begun to use you a little bit, it's a little more difficult to have that attitude. But if you live before God's face, you can have that attitude forever. Jesus never became proud even when he healed thousands of people.

Imagine if you heal 10 people, it could puff you up. Jesus was healing thousands regularly. It never puffed him up.

Not because he was God, but as a man he lived in humble dependence on his father, showing us that as human beings we can live like that every day. That even if God does amazing miracles through you, you can still remain the same humble person you are when you started your Christian life. So those are the two pictures of humility that I keep in my mind always.

Little helpless baby and that helpless branch in the tree. Keep that before you because those are the people to whom God gives revelation. He revealed them, it says here, to infants.

So I mentioned that as an introduction. I told you about this word mystery. Mystery is a truth of God which you cannot understand by any amount of study.

And even by hearing me explain it, you won't understand it. You'll understand in your head, you may be able to preach it to others, but you won't come as a revelation to your heart. Remember always, it's the heart that God's after, not the mind.

The mind is only a channel through which God wants to reach our heart. The eyes, for example, we read something. When I read something, it goes into my mind, but it must reach my heart.

When I hear something through my ears, it goes to my mind, but it must reach my heart. If it stays in my mind, I haven't got it. That's okay for mathematics and chemistry and physics and history and computer science.

If it reaches the mind, it's more than enough. But in the things of God, if it stops there, you missed it. You're no better than the other guy who didn't get anything in his mind.

That's a big mistake a lot of people make when they sit in Christian meetings or listen to a video message on YouTube or something. They think, I got it. Well, you got it if it reached your heart.

Otherwise, you haven't got it. Otherwise, you only understood something. The Bible says one of the enemies of faith is our understanding.

Turn with me to Proverbs 3. Proverbs 3. Verse 5. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Heart. Heart.

And don't lean on your mind, your understanding. You see how the mind and the understanding can be an enemy to faith? He's talking about faith here. Have faith in the Lord.

It's not something in the mind. It's in the heart. And that's why we made the mistake.

When we think of faith, we think it's, oh, if I hear this, I hear some testimonies of what God, miracles God did for that person and that person, the other person, the more I hear and understand in my mind, I've got faith. No, you haven't. It's the scribe thinking that he's got faith.

Faith is in the heart. And until it descends in the heart, you don't accomplish anything. That's why a lot of people think, hey, I thought I trusted God for that.

Why didn't it happen? Well, it was in your mind. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean upon your mind. Use your mind, yes, but don't lean upon it.

The mind is not saying we don't need the mind. God has created the mind for us to understand. But God's truth must go through the mind to our heart.

Man is body, soul, and spirit. It goes through the body, that's the eyes or the ears, truth, and then goes to the soul, which is the mind. But if it stops there, it hasn't reached the spirit.

The truth must reach the spirit, which is in the tabernacle, the most holy place, the innermost section of that tabernacle, which Jesus opened the way to when he died and the veil was rent. That's the spirit. God could not reach the spirit of man in the Old Testament.

Now he can. And so Jesus said once when he spoke to his disciples about revelation in Matthew chapter 13, he said in Matthew 13 verse 11, he uses this word mystery. The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 13 and verse 11.

He tells his disciples to you, it has been granted. In other words, it's not something you deserved or you achieved. No, granted means it was a gift.

And I tell you, all revelation is a gift. It has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to those other people, it's not being granted. And that's only because of their pride.

They couldn't get it. And he goes on to say further at the end of that chapter, Matthew 13 and verse 52 about the scribe becoming a disciple. Have you ever seen this verse? The Bible scholar, the scribe, the great preacher who preaches from his head has to humble himself and become a disciple.

Because when he becomes a disciple, he'll have within his treasure, some new things and old things. And then the disciple can bring out from the treasure of his heart, amazing truths, new and even the old truths when he brings it out will be fresh. It's like the manna.

The manna was the same shape and taste every day, which fell from heaven, but it was fresh every day. And that's the wonderful thing when a scribe becomes a disciple, even if he's telling you something for the hundredth time, it'll be fresh. Brothers and sisters, that's how we must all be.

We may not all be preachers and teachers. That's a gift God gives to some people, but even in ordinary conversation with one another, we should speak from the heart, the things that God's blessed our heart with, the revelations God gives us. That's the way a church is to be built.

It's not just by some outstanding teachers and preachers. Every one of us must open our hearts in humility to receive the Holy Spirit's power, to let him dwell there and give us a revelation that we can share with one another. Well, so much for an introduction.

Let me tell you about two mysteries which are called great mysteries. We find the word mysteries many times in the New Testament, but only twice do we read of something called a great mystery. So, that's something special.

So, I'll show you those. The first great mystery is in 1 Timothy 3.16, and this is such an important mystery that it says in verse 15, every true church must be a pillar and support of this truth. 1 Timothy 3.15, the last part, the church of the living God is the pillar.

In the olden days, you know, they didn't have concrete structures and beams and all that. They had pillars. Every building was supported by pillars.

You remember when Samson pushed the pillars down, the whole building collapsed because they didn't have beams those days. So, the church is the pillar and support of a truth. And if the church does not support this truth, the whole thing collapses.

And unfortunately, a lot of churches and Christians, because they don't believe in revelation, they don't explain these mysteries to God's people. And that's one of the reasons for the shallow level of Christians these days. That's why you find divorce, for example, not only among believers, but among pastors.

And can you dream of such a thing happening in the first century in the days of the apostles, that divorced people were appointed as elders of pastoral churches? Unbelievable! How did Christendom sink so low? Because the pillars were pushed away, not by Samson, by the devil. The church must be a pillar and support of this truth. This is a great mystery of godliness.

It's the number one great mystery. And that is that he, that is Christ, was revealed in the flesh and was pure in his spirit. And the Living Bible paraphrases it like this.

It is true that the way to live a godly life is not an easy matter. But the answer lies in Christ, who came to earth as a man and was pure in his spirit. See, this is the thing, from the time of Adam till the time of Christ, a person who lived in the flesh, and we were all born of the flesh, could never keep his heart pure.

Externally, they could keep the 10 commandments or the 9 commandments anyway, but they couldn't keep the heart pure. The 10th commandment dealt with the heart. Thou shall not covet.

You shall not desire your neighbor's wife or that girl who walks on the road who is your neighbor's daughter. You shall not desire. They could never keep that.

And God kept that 10th commandment to reveal to people, you'll never reach up to my standard until the Holy Spirit came. Even the Apostle Paul says in Romans 7, I kept all the law, but when it came to the 10th commandment saying you shall not covet, oh, I just gave up. All types of lust, he says, came in my heart and I couldn't overcome.

But he says in Romans chapter 8, but now that the Holy Spirit has come, the righteous requirement of the law, which is the 10th commandment, is fulfilled because we walk in the spirit, not according to the flesh. So from the time of Adam till Christ's time, nobody could keep their heart pure because of the flesh. And yet now Jesus comes with the same, not sinful nature, but with the same body like ours and tempted like us.

That's the interesting thing. Hebrews 4.15 says he was tempted in all points exactly as we are, but he did not sin. That's what it says here.

He was pure in his spirit. And the answer, the secret of living a godly life, the mystery of godliness or the secret of how to live a godly life is not found in some experience of sanctification or some theory. It's found in Jesus, not in a doctrine, but in the person of Jesus who lived on earth as a man tempted like us, but did not sin.

That's the first great mystery. Turn with me to Hebrews in chapter 4 and verse 15, which makes this very clear. Hebrews 4.15 says, we don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize with us in our weaknesses.

I think many Christians think that Jesus cannot sympathize with us when we are tempted. The devil succeeded in convincing most, even most believers that Jesus was not tempted like you. He cannot sympathize with the pressures you're facing right now in your life in with temptation.

But the Holy Spirit says he can sympathize. He can sympathize 100% because he was tempted exactly like you and me, like us in every point. Two things, exactly like us and in every point.

And he did not sin. Once we understand that, we say, hey, he can sympathize with me. Hebrews 2 and verse 18 says, because he was tempted like this and he suffered.

Suffered means not physical suffering there. His relation to suffering in relation to temptation. You see, when we are tempted, the Bible speaks about the pleasures of sin.

You know, it says Moses rejected the pleasures of sin, Hebrews 11. So there is pleasure in sin. The Bible doesn't deny that, but it's a passing pleasure.

Moses, it says, rejected the passing temporary pleasures of sin. The opposite of pleasure is suffering. And whenever I'm tempted, I have the choice of either choosing the way of pleasure, satisfying myself or denying myself and suffering.

It's always a choice of pleasure or suffering when I'm tempted. For example, when I'm provoked to get angry, it's a bit of a suffering to deny myself and keep quiet. There's a certain satisfaction or pleasure I get in letting that person get a piece of my mind.

You all know how real that is. You say you let out your anger and you feel relieved. Well, you feel relieved because you got a pleasure out of it.

It's like the pleasure of sex, the pleasure of having told him exactly what I think of him in anger. There's a suffering if I have to keep quiet about it. There's a suffering when you have to love somebody who hates you.

There's a suffering when you have to do good to someone who's doing evil to you. There's a suffering. There's a pleasure in making him suffer, cursing him in some way and treating him badly just like he treated me.

So, when it says Jesus suffered in relation to temptation here, it is that all through his life, whenever he is tempted and he had the opportunity to choose pleasure, indulging himself or suffering, denying himself, he chose suffering consistently. That's why he never sinned. And he says you can do that but God won't force you.

When he sent Adam and Eve into the Garden of Eden, he gave them a choice, the power of choice and a conscience to tell them what is right and what is wrong. And you and I have that too. A conscience that tells us what's right and wrong and the power of choice and it's your choice that determines whether you suffer or you please yourself.

So, because he was suffered, he's able to run to the aid, to our aid when we are tempted. See, this is the wonderful thing. In the Old Testament, they didn't have somebody to help them.

They only had a commandment saying don't do this, don't do this, don't do this, he must do this, do this, do this. But now we have somebody to come to our help when we are tempted. It's wonderful.

I picture it like sitting in an examination hall with a tough question paper and the teacher who set the questions sitting next to me and saying, I'll help you answer them. This is great. Then I can get 100% in every question because the one sitting next to me is the one who wrote the question paper.

And he says, I'll help you with every one of those answers. They didn't have that in the Old Testament. This is how I see Jesus, running to my aid when I'm tempted.

This is a great mystery of godliness that he was exactly like us, but without sinful flesh, but he was tempted exactly like us. Now, I don't try to go and analyze the psychology of Jesus. It's none of my business.

I mean, to analyze human beings itself is a difficult thing. Can you imagine trying to analyze the inner life of Jesus? I rest in this truth that he was tempted exactly like me. And every time he suffered, he never chose the way of pleasure.

It says in Romans 15, and Romans 15, it says, and verse three, Christ never pleased himself. He never chose the way of pleasure, not even once. He chose the way of suffering.

And he's shown me, he says, follow me. You know, this is actually the meaning of taking up the cross every day. When he said, if you want to follow me, you got to take up your cross every day.

There's something I have to put to death within me. It's in the moment of temptation that I take up the cross and say, no, Lord, I will not yield to that. I know I'll get a lot of pleasure out of saying those words, those angry words to that person.

I know I'll get a little pleasure out of lusting after that woman or watching that pornographic site. Yeah, the Bible doesn't deny there is pleasure in sin, but it says it's a passing pleasure. Hebrews 11, verse 25, 26.

It's a passing pleasure. So the Bible doesn't deny this pleasure. It says it's a passing pleasure.

Be there, and you all know that every pleasure of sin that you've enjoyed is for a period, and then it's gone. After that, regret and sorrow, because the pleasure is over in a few minutes, and the regret and sorrow continues for years. How foolish man is to choose that five minutes of pleasure and live with regret and sorrow for years.

Yeah, that's it. So Jesus was wise in the same. He never chose the way of pleasure.

He chose the way of self-denial. So in the power of the Holy Spirit, we can also live that life as it says in Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8, it says, the second part of that, if by the power of the Holy Spirit, you put to death the deeds of the body, the things the body wants to do, you will live. Paul once said in 1 Corinthians 9, I make my body do what it should do and not what it wants to do.

My body wants to do a lot of things. My eyes want to look at a lot of things. My eyes want to read a lot of things, which I shouldn't be reading and look at a lot of things I shouldn't be looking at.

My tongue wants to say a lot of things, which should not be saying. But Paul said, I discipline myself, 1 Corinthians 9, the last verse, to make my body do what it should do and not what it wants to do. That's the Living Bible paraphrase of that verse.

Very accurate. That's discipline. To discipline is to make my body do what it should be doing, not what it wants to do.

And so, if through the Spirit, I put to death these deeds of the body, I will live. I will enjoy spiritual life. And this can come as we understand this great mystery of godliness, that Jesus came like me, was tempted like me.

He never sinned and opened a way for me also to overcome sin, to come to a life where I consciously do not sin. Though unconsciously, I may be doing it. But God gives us more and more light on that unconscious area as we walk with him, so that the unconscious becomes conscious after a while.

That is sanctification, where more and more and more and more we get light on our self-life. But now I want to go to the second great mystery. The first one we saw was the mystery of godliness that relates to our personal life, the individual Christian seeking to walk in Jesus' footsteps.

The second mystery is something more. The great mystery, I mean. This is in Ephesians 5 and verse 32.

This is the other place where in the New Testament we read of a great mystery. This mystery is great, but I'm speaking with reference to Christ and the church. So, the second mystery doesn't relate to just my personal life.

The first one relates to my personal life, wanting to live a godly life myself. It doesn't relate, even if my wife doesn't or my brothers don't, I live a godly life. But the second mystery, and these two go together, you can't have one without the other.

The second relates to Christ and the church, where I'm not thinking just of myself. I'm related to a number of others who are also members of what the Bible calls the body of Christ. I'm an individual member in it.

If I'm a finger, for example, I want this finger to be healthy, always healthy, free from injury. That's the first mystery. But the second mystery is this finger must be willing to work with all the other members in the body which are completely different from it.

That is a mystery. And I found that through the years that many people who are willing to hear my teaching on living a godly life and overcoming sin, when it comes to the second area of working together with others and being built together into a local church, into a family of God, that's where the problems arise. They say, no, I don't want that.

It's too inconvenient. You know, like that little verse says, to dwell in love with saints above, won't that indeed be glory? To dwell below with saints we know. That's a different story.

But that's where our Christianity is tested, to dwell below with saints we know. That's the church. It's a second mystery.

You know, it is a mystery, I tell you. And you can see when you look around at churches, most people haven't understood it. They haven't got a clue of it.

But God wants to build churches and families. So this is a great mystery. That means it's something you can only understand by revelation.

How two people are so different from each other can become one. How 10 people different from each other can become one. How 50 people different from each other can become one function as a body.

It's really a mystery. Even, and you won't get to that if you don't get past the first mystery. If you're not serious about living an overcoming life, overcoming sin in your life, don't even attempt to go.

You can't go into college before you finish school. It's something like that. When you finish school, you can go to university.

So what is this great mystery? This refers to Christ and the church. And what is the verse which is referred to here? Verse 31. We are members of his body, verse 30.

And then verse 31. Listen to this. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.

Now that's referring to marriage because that whole section is referring to husbands and wives. Verse 22 onwards, he's talking about husband and wife. A husband when he gets married must leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife.

In fact, that's the first commandment in the Bible written for us in Genesis 2. In Genesis 2 in verse 24, the first commandment in scripture is a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. But here it says, the Holy Spirit says, that's not just referring to that married husband. It's referring to Christ and the church.

Wow. Because Christ left his father to be married to us. Amazing truth.

That's the pattern. And the two will become one. So when we go back to Genesis where that verse comes, you know that was initially referring to Adam and Eve.

That verse is a quotation from Genesis chapter 2 in verse 24. A man shall leave his father and mother and the two shall become one. This is a great mystery. And people who read the Old Testament didn't even realize there's a mystery hidden in that verse.

But when you come to Ephesians 5, you see, yes, there is a great mystery here of Christ and the church. So we go back to God making Adam and Eve. And we see something when you look at it as a picture of Christ and the church that God made Eve, we read in Genesis chapter 2, to be a helper.

Verse 18. Genesis 2.18. It's not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him or as a margin of my Bible says, corresponding to him.

I'll make him a helper which will be just like him. It won't be him, but it'll be like him that she can help him and help him and everything. She's a helper.

So that's what the church is supposed to be. When you see this as a picture of Christ and the church, that God made Eve to be a helper to Adam and God's made the church, you and me, to be a helper to Christ in his work. And if I'm not doing that, I'm not fulfilling that function.

It means I haven't understood the second great mystery. And I can't do it alone. What I can do alone is the first great mystery, overcoming sin all by myself.

I don't need anybody's help for that. No, I can do it all by myself. I can live a lonely life and overcome sin.

I can be a monk in a monastery and overcome sin. But when it comes to the second mystery, I can't be a monk in a monastery and accomplish that. And I can't even be a member of a church without being actively involved with the other members in the church and accomplish the second great mystery.

No. And this is why a lot of people shy away from it. A lot of people like to come to a conference like this and hear truths and they are stimulated in their mind and they like to listen to YouTube messages that stir their mind and say, boy, I never saw that in Scripture.

I never saw that in Scripture. That's not the ultimate goal of all these messages. It's a transformed life, which incorporates us into the body of Christ.

Then you've understood the truth. And that's the purpose of our coming together like this. You know, there are some things we can't get just by listening to YouTube, for example, for example, right now, these messages are going to be on YouTube in a little while.

Oh, you didn't have to take the trouble to come all the way here. Next week, you can sit at home and listen to it. You save a lot of money, save a lot of inconvenience.

But you see, technology through the years has been able to transmit voice first and then video so that you can sit in your home and you've got a big enough screen. It's almost as though that man of God is speaking directly to you. It's almost as good as being in a conference.

But there's one thing technology can never produce, and that is produce the presence of Christ, which is where two or three are gathered together, which you can't produce just by watching on YouTube. The

presence of Christ can never be transmitted through YouTube. It's the audio and the video.

That's all. It stops there. And there'll never be a technology that transmits the presence of Christ that comes together when God's people come together in a conference like this.

That is the difference. That's the difference between coming together with others and just sitting at home and watching a message. Some people think it is the same, but it is not.

There's a world of difference. If it is only head knowledge, you can sit at home. You never need to go even to a church service nowadays.

There are much better messages on YouTube than preached in most churches nowadays. A lot of messages, many churches are boring, but you can select in YouTube. The advantage of YouTube is you can turn off that speaker whenever you don't like him and choose another one.

You can't do that in a church service. But what I say is the presence of the Lord is the main thing that makes a church a church where two or three are gathered together in my name. What happens? There I am in the midst of them.

That is a New Testament church, not just that follows the right pattern and like, you know, we don't have pastors, we have elders, and we have New Testament principles in financial matters, and we have New Testament principles, and we practice immersion baptism and not child baptism. Excellent. Very good.

But that doesn't make a church. What makes a church is the presence of the Lord. There were two or three gathered together, not with two or three gathered together, they'll have immersion baptism, but with two or three gathered together, I am in the midst.

And if that is not there, that's not a New Testament church. I don't care what doctrines it practices. It can follow every little detail of what another New Testament church practices in doctrine, go down to the last letter, and Christ may not be there.

That's not a New Testament church. So I'll make him a helper suitable for him. So the purpose is that we as a church become helper to Christ in his ministry.

You have to see that. And the word helper, here, by the way, is the same word that Jesus used, if you turn with me to John 14, about the Holy Spirit. Imagine the word, you know, Jesus was there in Genesis chapter 2, making Eve.

I hope you know that. He was part of the Trinity that made Eve. Jesus made Eve and said, this is a helper.

And the same Jesus comes to earth 4,000 years later and says in John 14 and verse 16, I will ask the Father and he'll give you a helper. That's the Holy Spirit. And so when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we become real helpers.

Like Eve was, to Jesus, filled with the helper. That's why the same word is used. You cannot, like I said, you cannot really come to build a church the way the Lord wants until you understood the first mystery of really seeking to follow Jesus in the way of self-denial.

And here also, you can't really be a helper unless you've let the real helper come and fill you. The real helper is the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that in John 14, 16, I will ask the Father and he'll give you another

helper.

He'll be with you forever. That's the spirit of truth. And he says this spirit of truth in Old Testament times, and up till now, verse 17, the disciples at that time still under the old covenant, John 14, 17, the spirit of truth, the last part of verse 17, is now only with you.

He's outside of you, with you. But in the day of Pentecost, he will be in you. Do you notice that in verse 17? He's with you now and he'll be in you as long as he's with you.

You don't change. For example, even after three and a half years of listening to Jesus, what were they discussing at the Last Supper? Now that Jesus is dying, who's going to be the next leader? Can you imagine that leader is going to be crucified and they're discussing who's going to be the next leader? Is it you or me? Matthew says, I'm the chartered accountant here. Peter, you're just a fisherman.

They were discussing that. Three and a half years of ministry did not change them because the spirit was with them. But everything changed when the spirit came in them.

Then they had no desire for leadership. They only wanted to be servants, gladly to give place to each other. So the spirit who is with you will be in you.

And then this helper will make you a helper to Christ, like Eve was to be a helper to Adam. So the two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery.

But it refers to Christ and the church. So when you turn back to Genesis, the number of things we learn there. You know, Genesis chapter 1, 2, and 3, I'd say almost the whole Bible is in a nutshell in those three chapters.

Amazing truths that we can learn from Genesis 1, 2, and 3, how God created the heaven and earth. And the Bible says, every good and perfect gift comes from the Father, James 1, 17. That means the Father never makes anything imperfect.

Never, never, never. So when it says God created the heaven and earth, it was perfect. Because God never creates anything imperfect.

And how in the world does it say in the next verse, it was formless and empty and dark? Or as another translation says, the earth became formless, empty, and dark. Because between verse 1 and 2 is when the head of the angels fell and became the devil. And just like the earth was cursed when Adam sinned, that original earth was also cursed when Eve sinned.

Sin brought a confusion into the earth. And it's not mentioned there because this book is not written for angels, it's written for man. So man's history begins it.

But the fall of the devil is mentioned in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. But it happened over there between verse 1 and 2. And then the earth became. God never made it like that.

Because as we read, God makes only perfect gifts. God never creates anything dark and empty and formless. So He didn't create the earth like that.

He created, verse 1, perfect. But it became formless and dark. And after that, you read the word made.

God made this, made this. There's a difference between created and made. In six days, the Lord made heaven and earth.

He created it in a moment. If you're careful with these words, you'll find never in the Bible does it say, God created the earth in six days. People who read the Bible carelessly imagine that's true.

Try and find it. Go to concordance and look for it. It's not there.

A lot of people say, God created the heaven and earth in six days. Those are careless people who read the scriptures carelessly. God says, He made the earth.

And that's after the earth was spoiled. He made, He made, He made. But then He created man.

He made of the dust of the earth, but the spirit within man was created. So man was both made and created. And what we see here is a number of things.

One, that when the devil messes up something, God comes to restore it. That's the first message in chapter 1 of Genesis. If the devil's messed up something, immediately, God comes to restore it through two means.

One, verse two, the Holy Spirit. Two, God's Word. Verse three, the Word of God.

So what you see in Genesis chapter 1 is the operation of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God remaking this corrupt earth. And it's a parable of what God does to us. God created man perfect, and the devil came and messed him up, and we are born in sin.

Now the Holy Spirit comes. Genesis 1-2, the Holy Spirit broods over us, and God speaks His Word and remakes us into such a beautiful creation that at the end of it, God looked at it and said, it's very good. One day God will say that about us, provided we allow Him to work on us day by day by day.

On the first day, God said. The second day, God said. Third day, God said.

And if I keep listening every day of my life to the third day and the 10,000th day, listen, listen, listen, listen to what God is saying, I will be transformed too, just like that earth was. Till one day God can look at my life and say, very good. And in that will be this husband and wife that God made.

So I see there in Adam and Eve a picture of Christ in the church, the second great mystery. That was the first picture of Christ in the church that we have in the Bible. And there I see what I'm supposed to be.

I'm not supposed to be just an individual Christian. I'm supposed to be a part of a body that is called the church, the bride of Jesus Christ. And Jesus is the bridegroom.

And that's why it's very, very important that I'm built together, not with half-hearted people who don't obey God's word, or not serious about obedience to God's word, but with wholehearted Christians who are serious, that I allow myself to be led by godly men who are wholehearted in wanting to build the church as the bride of Jesus Christ. Then it'll be a family. That's the origin of this beautiful family of God.

I mean, just as beautiful as Eve was in Adam's eyes. I mean, Adam, it says here that when he saw Eve in Genesis 2, it's very interesting to see this passage of Scripture. Read it continuously and see.

It's a very humorous picture here. Genesis 2, 18. God said, it is not good for man to be alone.

I will make him a helper suitable for him. Now, don't jump the gun and go to the Eve. No, we haven't got there yet.

Adam is still alone. Remember, he's still alone. Eve doesn't exist.

There's no such thing as a woman so far. I'll make him a helper suitable for him. And the next verse says, he brought all the beasts of the field and the creatures of earth to Adam to see if they would be a helper to him.

So, what about this lioness, Adam? Or this beautiful female dog? Verse 20, the Lord has said, but for Adam, no helper was suitable for him. You see the context? Why did God bring all those animals before him? The context is, I want to make him a helper, verse 18. And then he brings all the animals to Adam.

And he says, but among them, verse 20, last part, nobody was found to be a helper suitable for him. Because the nature was not the same. It was a different nature.

That animal may look so beautiful. But Adam says, not my nature. I often quote this verse to young men looking for a bride.

That pretty girl, does she have the same nature, divine nature as you? Otherwise, like Adam, say no. And when he had said no to every last one of them, then, verse 21, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and made Eve and said, here you are. When we have rejected that which is contrary to God's ways, he presents us with the wife he wants us to have.

And then, like one of the paraphrases, I don't know whether it's living Bible or one of those paraphrases, when man sees Eve, he says, wow, this is it. I think it's a living Bible which paraphrases like that. I believe that's exactly what Adam said in whatever language he used those days.

Wow, this is it. He saw Eve. And after seeing all those animals, I can imagine after seeing all those animals, and then see you and say, wow, this is it.

So, I see there a picture of Christ in the church. Christ is not going to receive those who live like the animals. He wants to be able to look at us and say, wow, this is it.

This is what I was looking for. This is my bride. When we think about being like the animals, what's an animal interested in? Any animal in the world, dogs, pigs, cats, elephants, whatever it is, food and sex.

And it doesn't matter who they have sex with. Any number of female dogs, any number of female rabbits or elephants, there's no distinction. And when a man's attitude to sex is, I want to look at some pretty woman on my computer.

It doesn't matter who she is. It doesn't matter if it's not my wife. He's like an animal.

I don't know whether you realize that. There's no difference between him and that dog who goes after so many female dogs. No difference at all.

He wants to see all these naked women on the screen or his smartphone or whatever it is. You think the Lord is going to choose that person? He waits till Adam rejects all that, then says, here, I'll give you your bride. Learn something from that.

There's truth in every page of scripture if you want to look for it. If food is your God. Do you know that food is the God of some people? Just like sex is the God of some people.

You read in Philippians chapter 3, Philippians 3, it says, there are many people, he says, who are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Philippians 3, 18. The Lord says, I'm weeping when I say this, that there are people who are enemies of the cross of Christ.

And how are they enemies of the cross of Christ? Verse 19, their God is their stomach. That's exactly what it says in the margin of my Bible. Their God is their stomach, their appetite.

They are occupied with earthly things, like animals. You know, an animal's head is always looking down. Have you ever seen an animal looking up? I've never seen one.

No animal, dogs, cows, you know, anywhere you see them, they're always looking down. They are always looking for food and sex. That's it.

And when a man is like that, he's like an animal, not fit to be the bride of Christ. That's why we've got to take our attitude to sin more seriously. It's a helper suitable for him, a helper like him.

And that's why we go back to the first great mystery, that he became like us so that we can follow him and be like him. That's why he sends a spirit into our hearts. That's the foundation for building a beautiful family in the church.

Let's pray. So while I head us about in prayer, I want you to pray a little prayer in your heart that you can do whatever particular thing God spoke to your heart today. Say, Lord, write it deeply in my heart that I don't miss out on what you're trying to say to me.

You're the same God who spoke words into chaos and created beauty into that chaotic situation in Genesis 1. You can do the same in my life today. Speak the word, Lord. I want to live by every word that proceeds out of your mouth.

Thank you, Father. We give you all the glory for your word and for the revelation you give us from it. In Jesus name.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/iPyJAuFyOqk.mp4>

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