

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 3:11-13
The Wonderful Work of Salvation
Message 52
October 2/18
Words: 6050

INTRO: We are in Ephesians 3:1-13. The subject is the mystery of the Church and it is a most important one to understand. One can study history for a life-time and never figure out what life is all about. But when you study the Bible you can learn a lot of history and find out why the universe exists, why you and I exist, and what the purpose of it all is. Where else can you learn this?

And in these first 13 verses of Ephesians 3 Paul reveals a truth that had lain dormant for 4,000 years. It was a mystery because only God knew about it. But God's mouth had been shut about this matter. Then the fullness of time came, and God sent Christ into the world. In this message, time will be an important concept. Well, sinful man, sinful religious man, to whom God had been revealed rejected the sinless Messiah and had Him crucified, trusting that that would be the end of this troublesome Man.

But God did something amazing. Huge prophecies began to be fulfilled. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was fulfilled in Christ. The Feast of Passover, the death of the real Passover lamb was fulfilled in Christ. The Feast of First-fruits was fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ. These were huge events. The central events of Scripture.

Then after His resurrection Christ showed Himself alive for 40 days by many infallible proofs. These proofs cannot be rightfully denied even now, 2,000 years later. Then add 10 to the 40 and you have the feast of Pentecost. The prophetic truths of three of the seven feasts had been fulfilled. And now, ten days after Christ ascended we arrive at the feast of Pentecost, and here the prophetic picture of this feast began to be fulfilled.

You see, on the feast of Pentecost they had two loaves of bread, and amazingly they were leavened. They had yeast. Leaven pictures sin. Why would there be two loaves, and both had leaven? I believe it pictures two groups of sinful people, Jew and Gentile. And for 2,000 years this feast has been in the process of being fulfilled.

And now three more prophetic feasts lie before us and when their prophetic significance is fulfilled, they will bring us past the rapture, through the tribulation to the millennium. After the millennium God's entire plan will have been fulfilled and you and I will be either in hell or in heaven forever. But for now we are still in the Church age, and that is what verses 1-13 of this chapter are all about.

We have been considering two reasons why God revealed the mystery of the Church to Paul. We find the first purpose for the revealing of the mystery to Paul in verse 8. It was that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. We are blessed among the Gentiles because of this.

The second purpose was in verse 9. The content of that second purpose was to make all see what the fellowship of the mystery of the Church is. And then we looked at the aim of that second purpose, and it was, in my understanding, to make the manifold wisdom of God known to the entire spiritual realm. Now how would God do that? In what manner would this second purpose find fulfillment?

b. The mystery of the Gentiles salvation (3:1-13)

2) The purpose of the revelation of the mystery (3:8-13)

b) The second purpose (3:9-13)

(3) The manner (11)

Well, that is now our subject and we want to look at the manner in which this second purpose is to be accomplished and we find this in verse 11 like this. It will be:

11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Before we look at that verse consider this: When you study history, can you from that history learn what life is all about and where we are going? No. All you know is history. But when you study the Bible you can know a lot of history, and

from what God tells us we can also know where we came from, where we are going, and why. Isn't that incredible! Where else can you learn that? God had a purpose in revealing all the things He revealed in the Bible and in revealing the Church age to Paul. First, Paul would preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ! That preaching has been going on for 2,000 and is still in progress.

Now note that Paul says that God is making known to the principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God according to His eternal purpose. When God created everything He had a purpose. The word translated *purpose* here is *protheesis*. It means to set out before. That is a plan, or purpose.

Oh, man has his own purposes. And behind man's purposes, in the dark shadows, stands the one who was once Lucifer. Now he is the dark one. Watch politics and you see him working with big desperation. It may be that he still thinks he can win. My wife pointed out to me the other day that it is only in the middle of the tribulation that Satan realizes he has but a short time.

Revelation 12:12 says: "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." He is removed from heaven and comes to earth in the middle of the tribulation.

Look at his work in our own government here in our province. Our government is of the sort largely operated by the one lurking in the shadows. For example, they are now

very busy trying to mandate that all schools must fall in line with their LGBT agenda. In fear of losing the next election, it seems, they are making as many moves in their direction as they can.

The Calgary Herald says that to our premier, truth has become a four letter word. Truth has become a curse word. Listen to the Calgary Herald. Before I quote let me explain that David Eggen is our education minister. Here is the quote from the Calgary Herald: In other words, schools must teach only relativism, no absolutes are allowed, otherwise those schools will not find favour with Eggen and his comrades in the NDP.

How about this statement from the religious school: "We believe men and women were created in the image of God, after His likeness, and therefore have transcendent, intrinsic worth."

Apparently, that statement is considered "unwelcoming, uncaring and/or disrespectful" by the Alberta government and is highlighted in orange.

In Rachel Notley's Alberta, Truth has become a four-letter word.

And again, they write:

"The unchangeable and infallible truth of the Word of God . . ." allegedly violates the *School Act* requirement that "diversity" must be respected. In the document sent to schools, the word truth is highlighted in yellow by the government, in a colour-coded document now nicknamed the "rainbow reprimand", end quote.

What standards do schools have to meet? They have to be, and I quote, 'safe and caring'. And what makes them safe and caring? There must be no absolute truth! The Bible may not be viewed as in authority over government. LGBT values, if there is such a thing, must be taught. And

there is much more to their present plan.

Now consider this. Ernest Charles Manning was the eighth premier of Alberta and was premier from 1943-1968. He was the longest serving premier in Canadian history. He was from Rosetown Saskatchewan and heard a man called 'Bible Bill' from Calgary preach on the radio and Manning committed his life to Christ. He was the host on radio of Canada's National Bible Hour for almost 50 years.

Now, only 50 years after Manning, we have a government that says you cannot teach truth in school and you have to be safe and caring by following their LGBT rules without truth. Oh yes, man has had and still has his purposes. But no matter how much you cut God out, in the end God's purposes of the ages in mankind will prevail.

So we want to consider verse 11 and God's purpose of making the manifold wisdom of God known in the heavenlies. Verse 11 says, and I quote:

11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

We looked at the word purpose. Now look at the word translated 'eternal'. I think the two literal translations of Darby and Young is better, and that is that it is, *according to the purpose of the ages*. If that is so, what is the purpose of the ages? Well, ages are made up of units of time. If you want to tax your mind simply try to define the word 'time'. Time is a most fascinating word or concept. And now we ask, why has everything taken 6,000 years so far? Why so much time? Because for God

to work out His plan takes time, ages of time. Man has to be allowed to move forward at his own rate. God cannot, and did not predetermine everything by winding all man's actions up like a clock, and now it is just ticking away and fulfilling what God has already predetermined. What makes me come to that conclusion? Study what glory is, and then take the fact that God made everything for His glory, and there is no real and lasting glory in robots. But there is real and lasting glory in free moral agents who choose to trust God by faith.

No, God did not predetermine all actions that will be done. What He did predetermine was that man must choose what he will or will not do. And as man makes his choices man sets the time when God will do certain things.

Jesus said that we should be ready for His return at all times. Were we to be ready because Scripture says Christ would come soon? No. It says we do not know the time, therefore we are to be ready at all times. How long it will be until Christ comes depends on how long it takes for man to come to the fullness of the time. By all appearance we are now nearing that time.

When God sent the flood in Noah's day, man had progressed in wickedness until God had to do something. When God sent Israel into Canaan to drive out the inhabitants of that land, that land had progressed to the point of no return. When God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, those cities first progressed to the point of no return. And now our entire world is heading to that point. We have just viewed what has happened in 50 years

to our conservative Albertans. But today it is not a nation here and there that is that is nearing the point of no return. Today it is the global village that is headed to the point of no return. That means Christ's return is near.

The book of Galatians says that God sent forth His Son in the fullness of time. The time had to be right before He could send His Son with maximum benefit. When you read through the Bible you see some of all that had to take place before we come to the fullness of time. When you bake a cake, if you put it in the oven before you have all the ingredients properly mixed, you have put it in before the fullness of the time for that stage. Then if you take it out too early, or too late, both have bad results because it was not the fullness of time. That is the purpose of the ages. And in the fullness of time, God sent His Son. And at precisely the right time, the rapture will happen.

Notice something back in verse 9. It says: *and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ...*

The word ages here is the word in our text. Note that Paul, in mentioning that the mystery has been hidden in God, modifies the word *God* like this. It is the God who created all things. Why does He add that further description? Why point out here that this is the God who created all things? Why modify the noun *God* like that?

I personally think it is possibly because here we have the

reason why God created everything. God's whole act of creation was for the purpose revealed in these verses and here, in saved man He displays His manifold wisdom to both angels and demons. The entire spiritual realm sees in the Church, not Israel, the Church the manifold wisdom of God. In bringing Jew and Gentile into one fellowship, God is able to display His manifold wisdom to the entire spiritual realm.

Now Paul adds to the words, "who created all things", another, extra explanation. He does this by adding the words that He created all things "by Jesus Christ." Modern versions do not include these words. And Christ is the center of God's entire plan. He was the One through whom everything was created, and now in the end of verse 11 Paul says that God accomplishes His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus, our Lord! So Romans 11:36 says, "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

Now think of it, God had this plan or purpose in mind from before the ages began. He has never been caught by surprise. When the Jews rejected Him and He brought this next step of the Church age into being, it was not because He had been caught not knowing what would happen. He knew both what would happen and what He would do!

So note verse 11 once more:

11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

I would translate this as, "...according to the purpose of the ages which He accomplished in Christ

Jesus our Lord." God fulfilled the purpose of the ages in Christ Jesus our Lord. The whole purpose of the ages stands or falls in Christ Jesus our Lord. The wisdom of God is wrapped up in Christ. Read the Gospels, and there you will read of the One who is the pivotal point of God's entire plan. There is the hub of the whole.

Is it any wonder that Satan spurred Herod on to try to kill Him?

Is it any wonder that He was able to incite the Jews enough to use a very wicked plan to eventually kill Christ? I think that when Satan got Adam and Eve to sin he thought he had won the battle. When that was not so, I think that when Christ hung on the cross he thought he had won. Must there not have been a wickedly, joyous time in the demonic realm when Christ was laid in the tomb?

But the battle wasn't over. When God raised Christ from the dead, the real battle had begun. Today, all true believers are God's means of winning the battle. The battle is won in the minds of those who repent from sin and who live by faith; not just for one day, but for a life-time. In such a life the wisdom of God is manifested to the entire spiritual realm. It is all wrapped up in Christ Jesus our Lord. We mostly don't recognize what is going on in the spiritual realm, but the battle is there every day in your mind and mine.

With that, we go now to these words of verse 12:

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

When it says, 'in whom' once again it speaks of Christ. And in Him we have access with confidence.

Eighty times the little preposition 'in' occurs in this epistle and many, if not most of the times they refer to in Christ, or in whom, or in Him or in Christ Jesus etc.. And now it says 'in whom we have boldness.' We, sinners, have boldness in Him.

Now we notice first that the antecedent of 'in whom' is Christ Jesus our Lord. Note well, that what follows here is only true if He is our Lord. And He is only our Lord when we live the way He wants us to live. Can I call Him my Lord when I live in disobedience to Him? Jesus Himself said in Luke 6:46, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" And what follows here is only true if He is truly our Lord.

I told you what I generally do. I study a passage for myself. Then I look at the various commentaries. And last I go to Lloyd Jones and I usually end up quoting him.

Now I had mostly completed verse 12 and then I read Jones. That is what I do when you want insights everybody else misses. I want to read part of a paragraph from him. He writes:

"In this particular statement (he is speaking of verse 12) Paul brings this part of his message to a kind of a grand climax and conclusion. In a sense we can say that everything the Apostle has been saying would have been of no value to the Ephesians unless it brings them inevitably to this particular conclusion. In other words the ultimate purpose of all Christian doctrine, Christian teaching, indeed the end of the Christian salvation itself, is to

bring us to what we are told in this verse", end quote.

When I might be done with a verse, he begins to say that all the rest is wrapped up in this verse! Here is the nugget! He points out that all of doctrine has its purpose in the practical, that is, how it is to be worked out in life. He says Paul has laid out great doctrinal truths in our passage, and now we want to see how it applies to life.

Doctrine must not stop at doctrine. It bears fruit when it is applied. So he says, "If doctrine stops at that point I do not hesitate to assert that it can even become a curse. Doctrine is meant and designed to bring us to God. It is meant to be practical" (3:94).

So we ask, just what is practical about this verse? Well, look at verse 12 again:

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

Now notice it says first, "in whom". It is not hard to find who the 'whom' refers to. The nearest antecedent for the pronoun 'whom' is Jesus Christ our Lord, of the last words of the previous verse. He is the center of everything when it comes to the plan of God for salvation.

So it is in Christ that we have 'boldness' and 'access with confidence in Him'. Now we must first see what is meant by this word 'access'. We ask, access to what? Well, go back to chapter 2:11-18 which says:

11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the

flesh by hands—

12 *that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

13 *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

14 *For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,*

15 *having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,*

16 *and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.*

17 *And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.*

18 *For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*

In verse 18 we have our word 'access'. Do you remember how far we Gentiles were removed from God the Father? We were 24 feet lower and then fenced out of the enclosure altogether. We could not even get as close as Jewish women could. We did not even have access to the women's court, never mind that of Jewish men, never mind that of Jewish priests, never mind that of special priests who could enter the Holy Place, never mind access to the Holy of Holies where only the high priest could go. We had no access to God the Father! We were

cut out altogether!

Do you remember that when Christ died the curtain between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place was torn? Do you remember that Jesus entered that Holy of Holies in heaven after He ascended? And now, and it absolutely phenomenal, we can now come into the Holy of Holies in heaven boldly!

And I ask you, how? Well, go now to Hebrews 4. The writer has been speaking of entering into God's rest, which is the rest of faith. So he says in verses 11-13:

11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Now because there is nothing hidden from God, and the writer is writing to these Christians who are departing from the living God, he reminds them of what the Word of God can do and that there is nothing in our lives that is hidden from Him. And note how the writer describes who 'Him' is. It is the One to whom we must give account! We will stand before Him some day and give account. And it is then that he gives verses 14-16:

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed

through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

15 *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

16 *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

We have a great High Priest in heaven. He has entered the Holy of Holies and we have access to Him! Listen now to John 14:13-14. Jesus said:

13 *"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

14 *"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

You see, we have access to God the Father through our High Priest Jesus Christ, and in Him we can come boldly to the throne of grace for help in time of need.

When Paul says here, "in whom we have access" it is access to God the Father in heaven through Jesus Christ our High Priest.

When Jones dealt with doctrine and practice he said, "In other words, if your knowledge of doctrine does not make you a great man or woman of prayer, you had better examine yourself again. The more you know, the more it should show itself in your prayer life, in your holy living, in every other aspect" (95).

So let me now read Ephesians 2:14-22:

14 *For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,*

15 *having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law
of commandments contained in
ordinances, so as to create in Himself
one new man from the two, thus making
peace,*

16 *and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body
through the cross, thereby putting to
death the enmity.*

17 *And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and
to those who were near.*

18 *For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the
Father.*

19 *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners,
but fellow citizens with the saints
and members of the household of God,*

20 *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and
prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being
the chief cornerstone,*

21 *in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows
into a holy temple in the Lord,*

22 *in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling
place of God in the Spirit.*

We spoke earlier of having no access, nothing in our favor, to bring us near to the Queen of England. But we have One in whom we have favor to bring us near to God! It is Jesus Christ! Without Christ there would be no access to God for us.

Now notice further that in Christ we have, and I quote, "boldness and access with confidence." I think the idea here is more, we can come with freedom. This word is used for freedom of speech. Sometimes when we are called on to speak we do not have freedom of speech. We cannot speak freely. We cannot really be

ourselves. I wonder, if we were given an audience with the Queen, would we come boldly or with freedom of speech? But when we come to God in the name of Jesus Christ, we can come with freedom of speech. Sometimes when we pray in public, especially if we want to make an impression, there is not freedom to be who we are.

Now when we have this freedom, now we can come with confidence.

When Jones speaks of this he says: "We can well introduce it by asking a question: How do you pray? What is the character of your prayer life? How do you feel when you get on your knees in prayer to God? What happens? Do you enjoy it? Is it free? Is it assured? What kind of praying is your praying? According to the Apostle our approach should be one which is characterized by 'boldness'. 'Access with confidence' is true Christian prayer" (96-97).

But notice now one more item in our passage. It says, "in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him." How do we get this boldness and confidence? It is by faith in Him! Oh what a great thing is faith! The more I learn the greater the matter of faith becomes to me.

3) The conclusion regarding the mystery (13)

Well, that brings us to the conclusion of this great digression into the mystery of the Church. And this conclusion is given us in verse 13 which says:

13 Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Do you remember how this section began? Paul said in verse 1, "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—" Now if we were in his place, and we were in prison would we not tend to think, "Poor me"? Would we not struggle to not lose heart ourselves? Would being in prison be something where we might rather expect encouragement from others to keep going? But no, not so with Paul. He is not a prisoner of Rome, he is the prisoner of Jesus Christ. Being in Christ's prison is not so bad when it is for His sake. As long as you can view life like that, what can possibly go wrong?

And now, instead of writing to them about how tough things are in prison and what they could pray for him, and what they might send him, he says, "Therefore, I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you..." Then notice first that his tribulations are for them. We find this in 3:1 like this, "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—" It was not necessarily just for the Ephesians but for all the Gentiles among whom were the Ephesians.

Now consider the word tribulation. It means a pressure, a squeezing. May I ask you, are you in the squeeze somewhere? Are you under some pressure? You see, Paul does not deny that he is under pressure. He is a realist. But pressure is not what determines his response. What he does is accept that the Lord would not allow him to be under pressure if it should not be.

So instead of being afraid he might lose heart over his own circumstances, he is afraid they might lose heart over his circumstances. So we must ask, why should they not lose heart over his circumstances? Well, first, Paul is in prison on their behalf.

And second, and in the context, they have access to God Almighty in heaven through Jesus Christ and they have faith in Him. There is no reason to lose heart. Albert Barnes says, "The word rendered "faint" ἠκκακῶ - means, literally, to turn out a coward, or to lose one's courage; then to be faint-hearted, etc." Why would one become cowardly because of disheartening outward circumstances when one can come into the very presence of God Almighty and bring one's concerns there?

Third, they shouldn't become disheartened because Paul, even in his imprisonment, is experiencing wonderful things! Not only that, in verse 12 he says, "in whom we have access". He does not say, "in whom you have access". He has access to God Almighty through Jesus Christ too. He can bring all his concerns to the Lord. So there is ample reason not to lose heart at Paul's tribulations.

But note now the last words. Paul says, "which is your glory." So we ask, what is their glory? Matthew Poole gives two options. He says, "Which is your glory; either he means, that their not fainting, or not falling away from Christ, by reason of his sufferings, was their glory; or rather, that his sufferings were their glory, in that he did by them seal the truth of the doctrine he had preached, being still ready to suffer for what he delivered to them."

Let me put those like this: Their glory could mean, 1 that their not fainting in spite of his sufferings was their glory. Or 2, by his sufferings he demonstrated the truth of the doctrine he taught.

I think there is a great truth to be learned here. I believe

their glory would be if they did not lose heart no matter what happened to Paul. We can become discouraged because of other people. So here is the great truth to be learned. It is our glory, it is a revelation of who we are if we do not faint because of external circumstances.

So many times I think of the Apostle Peter when it comes to this topic. Turn to Matthew 14. Jesus had fed a multitude with five loaves and two fish. And afterward He sent the disciples away by boat and He went to pray. We begin in verse 22:

22 *Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.*

23 *And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.*

24 *But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.*

25 *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.*

26 *And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.*

27 *But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."*

28 *And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."*

Peter was brave. He wanted to walk on the water. But he didn't want to just take the risk by Himself. Mr. John Neudorf said when he was in Israel, there was a rather charismatic character in their group. And when they took the traditional boat ride across the

Sea of Galilee, this man wanted to walk on the water. And he stepped off the end of the boat and promptly sank. They had to turn around and get a sputtering prophet out of the water. Peter didn't want that kind of an experience. He was spiritual enough to realize you should have the Lord's approval. Verse 29:

29 *So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.*

How do you think that must have felt? Stepping out on the water, and he did not sink into it. And so he began to walk toward Jesus. Verse 30:

30 *But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"*

31 *And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"*

32 *And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.*

33 *Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."*

How easy is it not to tell others, just place your faith in the Lord. He will help you. And then we get our own set of circumstances, and we look at the troubled water and the winds of tribulation or trouble are blowing, and we begin to sink in your own trial. How does our advice to others work in our own life?

CONCL: So we conclude. In verse 11 we learn that God had a purpose in the ages. The universe has already experienced numerous ages. When the Bible speaks of that which we call everlasting, that is time without end, it speaks of it as 'into the ages of the ages'. Oh the glory that awaits those who live faithfully to the end. And God accomplished His purpose in

Christ. After Christ came, was crucified, buried and raised again, God completed His purpose according to the ages in Christ.

And there is an amazing thing that when we make Christ our Lord, we have access through Him into the Holy of Holies in heaven where Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father. It is hard to grasp the magnitude of that truth. And it is in the name of Christ that we have access to God. I think it is very easy to forget when we pray what is actually happening. We enter the Holy of Holies in heaven by faith through prayer. And there we come to God the Father, and we can only do so because of Christ Jesus our Lord.

And now, because of all the truths Paul has taught in this section on the mystery of Christ, he asks the Ephesians not to lose heart because of his imprisonment. And we can learn from that not to lose heart in our trials and difficulties in life.