

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 3:1-13

Lesson #12

The Mystery

10/15/2017

Ephesians

Our wealth in Christ
ch. 1-3

Our walk in Christ
ch. 4-6

Ephesians 1-3

New life in Christ
1:3-23

New society in Christ
2:1-3:21

Praise for
blessings
1:3-14

Prayer for
insight
1:15-23

The Gentile
Gospel
2:1-22

A Mystery
until now
3:1-13

1

Ephesians 3

“¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles – ² if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; ³ that by revelation there was made known to me the **mystery**, as I wrote before in brief. (1:9) ⁴ And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the **mystery** of Christ, ⁵ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; ⁶ to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,”

The Gospel is known only by special revelation but once revealed it can be shared with all.

2

How are we to understand “mystery”?

- The Greek word does not mean “beyond comprehension” but “**as of yet unrevealed**”.
- The Christian Gospel had its roots in the Old Testament but it was **not clarified until Paul’s revelation**.
- Paul did not **invent** it, nor did he **discover** it in the Jewish Scriptures, or learn it through the **instruction** of the disciples of Jesus.
- Once it was known, it could be **shared through his teaching**.



3

What was the “mystery”?

It was not that God would, through Israel, bless the whole world.

Gen.12:1-3, Ps.2:8, Isa.42:6, 49:6 etc.

- The promises revealed to Israel through Abram included the ultimate blessing of the whole world **through Abram’s seed**.
- Jesus preached the **Gospel of the Kingdom** of God, which was embedded in his incarnation.
- Jesus **commissioned** his followers to go to the whole world with good news.



4

What was the “mystery”?

It was not that God would, through Israel, bless the whole world.

Gen.12:1-3, Ps.2:8, Isa.42:6, 49:6 etc.

It was the way God would bless the world.

- Messiah Jesus would not just **POINT** the way to the Law and Israel but would **BE** the way.
- A New Covenant would **not renew** the Old but **replace** it.



5

The uniqueness of the Christian Gospel of Grace

- It is not something we would expect humans to invent.
- It is not something that the prophets of the O.T. understood. 1 Pet.1:10-12
- It was at first resisted by Peter. Acts 10,15
- It is unique to the Christian story.

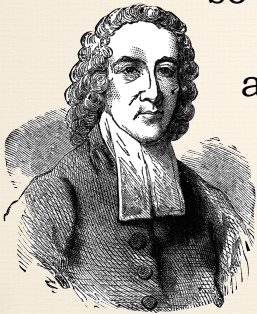


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“7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is **the administration of the mystery** which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; 10 in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be **made known through the church** to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. 13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.”

7

“There is perhaps no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodox divines do so much differ as stating the precise agreement and difference between the two dispensations of Moses and Christ.”



Memoirs of Jonathan Edwards
p 463

8

It is hard to overstate the significance of the dramatic changes that take place between the Old Covenant (with Israel through Moses) and the New Covenant (with the church through Christ) at Pentecost.



9

**O.T. promises / Christian life
Jesus’ Gospel / Paul’s Gospel
Clergy / Congregation**



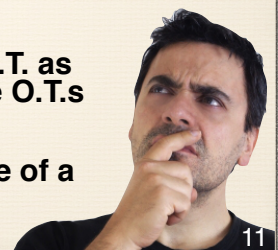
**The church / Israel
material / spiritual
N.T. use of O.T.
Church / State
Law / Grace
Faith / Works**



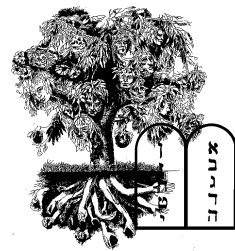
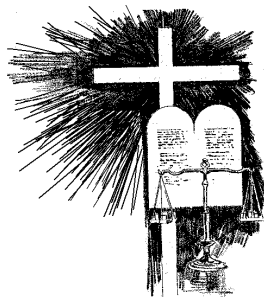
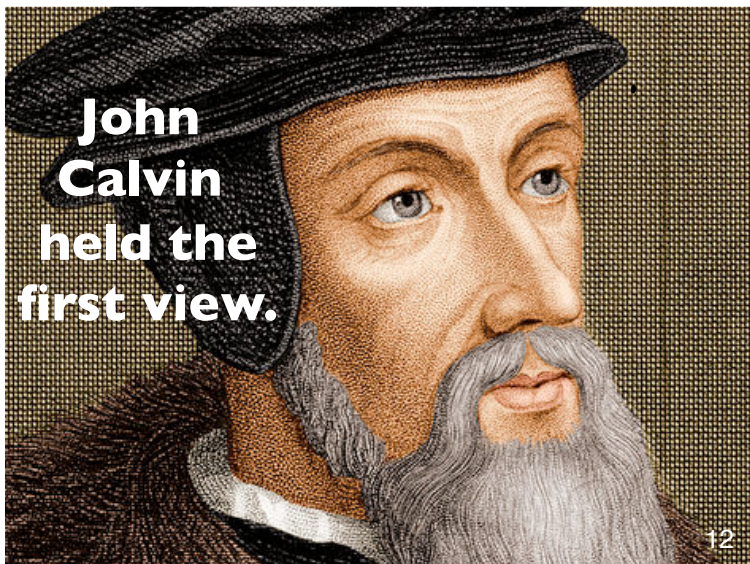
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There are generally two ways in which conservative Christians have managed the relationship between the O.T. and the N.T.

- All Scripture is written FOR us **but not necessarily TO us or ABOUT us**. The question is, how does this effect our reading of the O.T.?
- Some Christians see the N.T. as simply an **UPGRADE** of the O.T.’s spiritual operating system.
- Others see the N.T. as more of a **DISTINCT** spiritual OS.



11



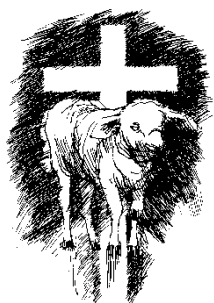
*Calvin emphasized
the Holy Spirit's
fulfillment of the law
IN and THROUGH us.*

13

View #1 Gospel = Law / Grace

Old Testament	New Testament
Grace	
Kingdom	
Law	
Moses	Jesus Paul

14



*Luther emphasized
the Word of the Cross
as deliverance from the law
by what Christ did **FOR us.***



16

View #2 Gospel = New Covenant

Old Testament	New Testament
Kingdom	
Law	Grace
Moses	Jesus Paul


17

Old Testament - Gospels		New Covenant
Old Covenant		Acts - Epistles
<i>John 1:17a</i> “For the Law was given through Moses; -		<i>John 1:17b</i> - grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”
18		

Old Testament - Gospels		New Covenant
Old Covenant		Acts - Epistles
Law		Grace
Israel		Church
Material hope		Spiritual hope
Old wineskins		New wineskins
19		

Jesus promised the Apostles that the coming Holy Spirit would bring *more revelation and understanding.*

John 16:13
“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth;** . . . and He will disclose to you what is to come.”

Old Testament - Gospels		Paul's Gospel
Old Covenant		Acts - Epistles
20		


The Apostles saw the coming of the Holy Spirit as *the beginning of the Gospel community.*

Acts 11:15
“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us **at the beginning.**”

Old Testament - Gospels		Paul's Gospel
Old Covenant		Acts - Epistles
21		

Paul understood his Gospel to have been a *mystery until his day.*

Ephesians 3:3-5
“that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, . . . which **in other generations was not made known** to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;”

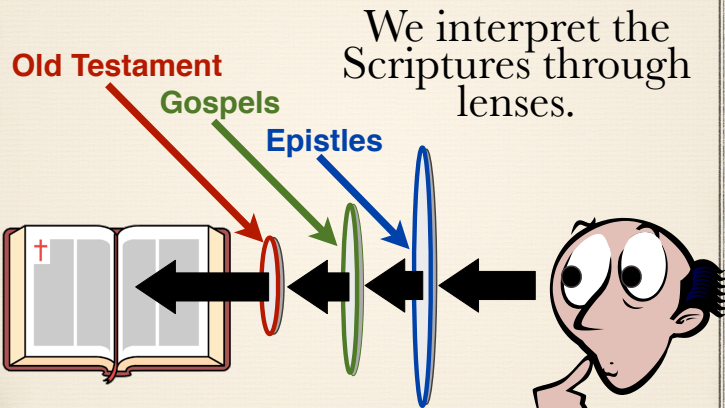
Old Testament - Gospels		Paul's Gospel
Old Covenant		Acts - Epistles
22		

The dwelling place of God among men.




Old Testament - Gospels		Paul's Gospel
Old Covenant		Acts - Epistles
23		

Christian theology comes through Paul more than Jesus (Synoptic Gospels) a part of the Old Covenant.



24

THE GOSPEL STORY



25

Paul's Gospel and Jesus' Gospel

Mark 1

"¹⁴ Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "repent and believe in **the gospel**."

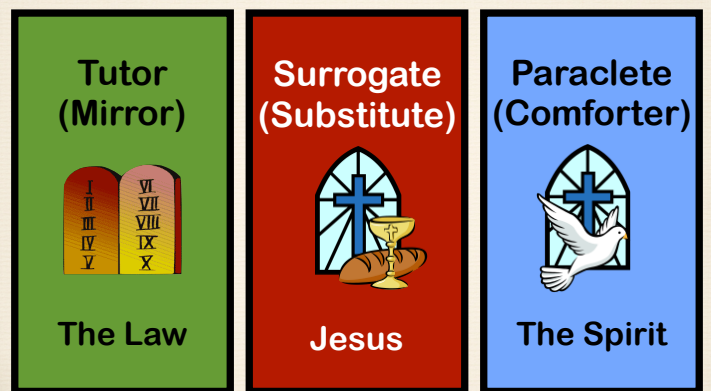
What were they to believe?

1 Corinthians 15

"¹ Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received, that Christ **died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures,"

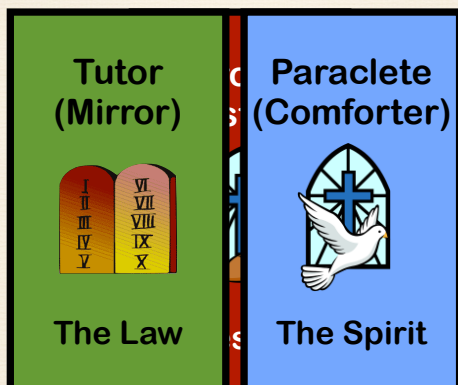
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Don't confuse the ministries of the Law, the Son, and the Spirit.



27

Justification before God is not by the Spirit empowering us to fulfill the demands of the Law but by the Cross.



28

What does this change?

- How we **read and apply** the O.T. and N.T.
- How we view the nature of our **expectations, perspective, and priorities** in this life.
- How we **relate** to God and His (our) spiritual family and the world.
- The nature of our **hope**.

John 1:17

"For the Law was given through Moses; **grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.**"

29