

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 21 January 2018
Services: 730, 930 Tewantin, 930 Peregian (via Mark)
Series: Every Spiritual blessing
Passage: Ephesians 1:9-10
Title: Informed
Text: Prefer 2011 NIV – ... *9 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.*
Outline: **Knowing how it ends...
...changes everything now**

I saw the movie “Murder on the Orient Express” after Christmas... **SLIDE**

Great scenery... steam train through snow-capped mountains...

...intriguing plot with a quite a few twists and turns throughout...

Now – I don’t want to spoil it for you if you’ve not seen it...

But knowing the **end** at the **beginning** – ie, if I went to see the movie again **now** – knowing how it ends, would **utterly change** how I viewed just about **every scene** in the movie...!

Knowing how it **ends...** changes **everything...** **BLANK**

Now – there’s quite a few situations in life where knowing the end changes everything...

Susan and I travelled back to Noosa from Katoomba... out through Narrabri and Mooree – a long hot drive - but because we knew the **destination** and what **awaited us** – - to call in at Emily and Anthony and see our granddaughter Mackenzie - that changed the nature of the drive... if we were just driving without a **destination** – without a **plan** – no **end** in **site...** **different story...**!

Knowing it how it **ends...** changes **everything...**

Knowing that the school holidays **will** eventually end...

Knowing that Trump will only ever serve 1 term... (?)

Knowing that there is an end-date to the **radio-therapy...**

Knowing that when you’re at the airport, the airport itself is not the destination but something great awaits at the other end of the flight... changes **everything...** //

It’s when there **unknowns** that life is most challenging isn’t it?

- **Will** my little girl get better?
- Are the tumours **shrinking**?
- Will I **ever** find a job?
- Will my **marriage** survive?
- Will I clear my **name**?

... those and similar questions are some of the toughest we’ll face...

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but friends... what I hope we'll see this morning... is that in the midst of life's uncertainties and challenges...
... **we** are totally privileged to know the end from the beginning... //

and knowing how it **ends**, changes **everything**...

and there are my two points this morning

1. **Knowing** how it ends
2. **Changes** everything

1. KNOWING HOW IT ENDS

Let's read again vv9-10...please look with me - *he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.* /

Many of us like a good mystery....

...especially when all is revealed and everything fits into place.

The Apostle Paul uses this word 'mystery' quite a bit... but whenever he does so, it's always in the sense that what was ONCE a mystery, is no longer – the mystery has been made known.

See what he's saying here? – he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure...

That is, God was **excited** to tell us his plans for the universe...!

Not just his plans for **tomorrow** or next **week** or **2018**... but his big plan for the entire **universe** for all **eternity**...!!

We **Christians** are "in the **know**....!"

Indeed that's why we **have** the Bible – God reveals himself, his plans, his purposes to us... so we **know**!!

We know **why** he created the world

We know our **place** in the created order

We know that we mucked everything **up** by doing our **own thing**...

And we know that because he **loves** us, because of his abundant **grace**... he had a plan to rescue us from our rebellion and its consequences and draw us back into relationship with himself! //

We know where **all history** is leading!!! //

Mystery **revealed!** ///

But what we being told specifically in these verses?

Look with me again - *he made known to us the mystery of his will – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.*

Well that's certainly not how we see the world right now!

We see **division** and **turmoil** and **injustice** and **oppression**...

We see **conflict** and economic **imbalance**

We see **religions** that teach **opposite realities**...

We see the **decline** in **Christianity** in the west

We see **rise** in **persecution of Christians** ...

Even in our own lives and families we know not all is well...

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But here's the **promise**... here's the **plan**... that one day God will bring everything together in **perfect unity** under the leadership of his **Son** – the **Messiah** – our **Saviour** – our **King** – **Jesus!!** //

Can we **dare** to imagine what that will be like?

Peace. No **division**. **Everyone** on the same **page**.

No one rushing off on their agenda //

Because there is only **one** agenda and it's the praise and glory of Jesus as we sing 'worthy is the Lamb who was slain'.

Philippians 2: Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord!!!

And from that beautiful verse in the second last chapter of the Bible – **Rev 21:4** - *He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death" or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.*

That's the **plan**... ///

You might ask – "hang on Mark - what about those who have been or who are currently opposed to God? What about those who reject Jesus?"

Great question... **important**... and as we always read Scripture **with Scripture** – and interpret Scripture **by Scripture**... then we understand that those who are opposed to God will either end up **reconciled** to him... or along with all evil and the evil one *himself*; **banished** from God's presence forever! – so that all which **remains** – will be under the unifying leadership of the King of Kings!! /

That's why we want to urge more and more people to turn to God and find forgiveness now...!!

Another question you may have is "**WHEN** Mark? – **when** will this happen?"

And I take you back to the passage – and the answer is – if you'll look with me once more - *he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 **to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment***

That is – **in God's perfect timing**...!

When it's time! / **His** time!

That may not be a very satisfying answer.... And if you're like me – some days – you want that to be **now!** – Just now Lord – please bring on the end, **NOW!**

So here's the reality – there are **some** things we **know** – which have been **revealed** to us – and some things we **don't!**

We know that everything will be brought into unity of shape and purpose under the brilliant and authoritative leadership of King Jesus.... But just **when** that will be has not been revealed to us... /

Remember (if you were this us) what we saw before Christmas? That **that day** will come like a **thief** in the night – **unexpected** and **unannounced**.

I've **never** had a thief do a letterbox drop informing me that they'll be working our area in the next week or so...

...and similarly – we won't be told **when** the end will come... just that it's **coming** and how **brilliant** it will be!

Again as we explored before Christmas... part of God's plan – part of the reason for the **delay** – one aspect of the things that must reach their **fulfilment**... from **2 Peter 3** – (you can read it later) – is the opportunity for more and more people to repent and come to know Jesus.... *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance...*

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friends – we're in the **know**...

we know **where** this world's heading... **everything in unity under Christ...**

but for our remaining minutes this morning, I want to explore – how this changes everything now...

2. CHANGES EVERYTHING NOW

What changes?

Three things – (at least three!)

Perspective, trust and hope

Being able to see a long way into the future, changes our **perspective**

Because we know how everything here will end, we have a different **perspective** from those around us...

...on what **matters**

...on what will **last**...

...on what is worth **worrying** about...

I remember my parents bemoaning on many occasions “I just don't know what the world's coming to”

The next time you hear someone say that; please respond – ‘**really?** – **let me fill you in!** God is bringing everything together in unity under Jesus'...

Yes, we worry about **Trump** and the leadership in our own nation...

...we worry about **global warming**... and all related issues

...we worry about **peak oil** and the sustainability of our reliance on **fossil fuels**...

...we worry about the proportion of people who have no access to **clean water and no sanitation**...

...we worry about the number of people who struggle simply to have enough to **eat**...

...we worry about the rise of **militant atheism**...

... we worry about the escalation in the persecution of **Christians**

...we worry about **freedom of religion** and **freedom of speech**...

...but brothers and sisters... the Lord has all this under control...

he has a plan... he's on a mission... to bring *unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ!*

That doesn't mean our concern over all those issues and causes and many others suddenly ceases... but it does mean we have some **perspective**...

Because we can become overwhelmed by all those issues... and feel small and helpless...

But we **know** there's a **plan**... we know there's an eventual **end** to the world's **sadness** and **tragedies** and **injustices**...! /

Knowing the **end**, changes our **perspective**.... /

Also changes our perspective in **personal circumstances**: are you struggling now – issues of **aging** perhaps? Medical **diagnosis**? Please know that this time in the light eternity is only **short**... If you should **die**...? as **hard** as all the associated issues are... that will only mean you get to experience the unifying leadership and the glorious of Jesus – **sooner**!!!! //

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So – this changes our **perspective** - ...it also deepens our **trust**...

Sometimes we don't have a clue what God is doing in our lives...

...and understandably... we ask – Lord – what are you **doing**? What is **happening**? Why am I facing this **challenge**??

And we've often said here – that we have to go with what we **DO** know about God's character and plans – to help us trust him for those areas where we **can't** or **don't** what he's doing... /

So – because we know he has a plan to bring everything into **unity** under **Christ**... / we know that everything that **happens**... is part of **that great plan** – even if we can't see or understand the **connection**!

God is using **everything** to bring about his **purposes**...

Romans 8 – *we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

He – in the context of this passage we've explored these past weeks... God has a plan to bring all things under Christ... and **chosen** us and **adopted** us and **redeemed** us to ensure we're part of the **plan**...

Therefore when things go '**wrong**'.../ we can **trust** him... he has a **plan**.

It's a **good plan**.

We're **part** of the **plan**.

He's **working** out his **plan**.

We can rest **easy** in the **plan**.

So – **because** we know the **plan**, – our **perspective changes**, our **trust deepens** and our **hope** grows stronger... //

It's easy to lose **hope**.... To **despair**...

But knowing the end from the beginning changes that... as our perspective becomes **eternal** and our trust runs **deep** – so our hope **lifts**... and we begin to grasp the significance of the entire plan of God.

Knowing that there is a **future ahead**... knowing God has everything in **hand**... knowing our **griefs** and **trials** here are only **short** – only **short**... in the light of **eternity**...

Then suddenly, as John Piper says, when we see the plans to bring everything under the unity of Christ -

- *grace gets **bigger**;*
- *Christ gets **greater**;*
- *his **death** gets more **wonderful**;*
- *his **resurrection** gets more **astonishing**;*
- *the work of the **Spirit** gets **mightier**;*
- *the power of the **gospel** gets more **pervasive**;*
- *your own sin gets **uglier**;*
- *the **devil** gets more **evil**;*
- *the gospel's **roots** in **eternity** go **deeper**;*
- *and the magnitude of its **celebration** in **eternity** gets **louder**. ////*

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Knowing the end from the beginning, changes everything **NOW!**

Having seen God's grand and glorious plan and how he's grounded it in the grace and sacrifice of Jesus...

... we want to live **WITH** him

we want to live **FOR** him

we want to live in such a way that others catch a **glimpse** of the **plan... //**

...we want to **kill off sin**

...we want to **love** our **families**

...we want to cut the useless **distractions** out of our lives

...we want to get with the **program** – **HIS program**

...so that our life **matters** because it's aligned with the **plans and purpose of the God of the universe!!**

We want to be people with a big **perspective**, a deep **trust**, with a lively and joyful **hope!!**

Oh that we put aside the **trivial...** and the **harmful...** the distractions... and the outright **sinful...**

And lift our eyes to the **eternal...!**

For we have been given **every spiritual blessing** in the **heavenly realm...!**

Chosen to be **holy and blameless**

Adopted as his **sons and daughters**

Redeemed from **sin and death**

And **informed** of his great plan *which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.*