

**EPHESIANS – THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S CHURCH –
OUR IDENTITY, OUR WALK, OUR WARFARE
PROGRAM 26 (#912206)
WEEK 6 (912346)
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**SERIES: Ephesians – The Mystery Of God’s Church –
Our Identity, Our Walk, Our Warfare
TITLE: Program 26 – God Wants People From Every Tongue, Tribe And
Nation In His Body**

MONDAY

OPEN

What’s in your heart, Beloved, when it comes to other people? I mean when you look at them honestly deep inside are there people that you despise because of their nationality cause you just don’t like those people, you just don’t like that nation, you just don’t like what they did to your country or maybe they’re from the north and you’re from the south or maybe they believe this and you believe that. What’s going on in your heart towards others? We’re going to talk about it today as we look at God’s precepts for life.

PART ONE

Do you know people who profess to be Christians and yet they’re prejudiced? I mean there are people that they do not like either because of

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the color of their skin or because they have moved into their neighborhood and they are not of the same culture and they are just invaders into your country and therefore although you claim to know Jesus Christ, you don't like them. Is God prejudiced? I mean think about it. Is God prejudiced towards the nations? Now we know that God is prejudiced in a sense for Israel. We know that that is His chosen people but what does God think about the rest of the nations? Does God think oh just leave them alone because they don't know anything about My Bible, and they don't know anything about My covenants of promise, and they don't know anything about the law. They don't know anything. They're worshipping a heathen idol that they have made and created with their own hands. Forget them. That's not what the gospel is all about and as we look at the mystery that Paul was talking about in Ephesians, you and I need to go back and we need to see what God has to say not only about the Jews but also about the Gentiles. And the Gentiles include nations from all over the world. It's every people and it's every tribe and it's every tongue and what does God think about them? Well this was good news to know that God was concerned about the nations, that God had not just all these years confined Himself to Israel. But the nations were on His heart. Egypt was on His heart. Syria was on His heart and the other nations of the world were on God's heart. The thing is that we really didn't know how much they were on God's heart until the mystery of the church was revealed. Let's go back to Ephesians and let's look at this glorious, glorious mystery and as we do, I want you to see how important it is for you to understand this so that when you look at people from different nations maybe it was a nation that was at war against your country, maybe it's a nation that has sent terrorists into your country, maybe it is a people that you were taught from a child that you shouldn't associate with. Or maybe you're just upset because these people are now living your country. All right, what does God think because you and I want to have the mind of Christ? And that's the purpose of studying the Word of God. So I

want us to go to Ephesians chapter 3, Ephesians chapter 3 and remember it says, **“that...,”** in verse 3, **“...by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote...in brief.” (Ephesians 3:3)** Now we know from studying Paul’s life and we don’t have time to go into the Scriptures but we know that from studying Paul’s life that from the time of his conversion until three years later, there was a time when he was alone. There was a time when he was in Arabia and we know from Paul’s writings that he was not taught the gospel by other believers but rather he was taught by the Lord Himself. And so when the Lord spoke to Him, He revealed to him this mystery. It wasn’t that Paul sat down and read it. It was rather that Paul sat with Christ and Jesus opened the eyes of his understanding. Now what did He open the eyes of his understanding about? Remember that Jesus was dealing with the Hebrew of the Hebrews. Jesus was dealing with a man from the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe that went with Judah that stayed faithful when the kingdoms divided. He was dealing with someone that sat at the feet of Gamaliel. I mean he was taught in all the Jewish standards. He excelled as a Jew, as a Hebrew of the Hebrews is the way he puts it. And so now he’s being taught and what is he taught? It says, **“By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations...,”** now this is so important, **“...[has] not [been] made known to the sons of men....” (Ephesians 3:4-5a)** In other words the population in general, the world in general did not know this mystery and Israel did not know this mystery. Israel was blind to this mystery. And so he says what is the mystery? Verse 5, **“Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to...,”** now watch. Not just Paul but, **“...to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.” (Ephesians 3:5)** Now what is that mystery? Well he says, **“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, 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.” (Ephesians 3:6-7) Now what is he saying? Well I want us to understand this and once again I want you to get out your pencil and paper and we’re going to draw our straight line and we’re going to get an understanding of the times, okay? So what I want you to do is on the left of that straight line I want you to draw a little man with a beard. You can just put a Yarmulke on the top of him. He didn’t have one in those days but anyway this is Abraham. Now, Abraham is the father of the Jewish nation. He is the father of the Jewish nation. He is the father of the Israelites. The Israelites eventually are called Jews from Judea, Judeans and they are also called Hebrews. So this is when God starts a nation. Now what God does is God works through that nation. So you come to Mount Sinai and you have Moses up on Mount Sinai and he’s given the 10 Commandments. So God is working through this. He gives them the law. All right, He gives then circumcision between Abraham and Moses He gives them the sign of the covenant that He’s making with Abraham that He is going to bring the Messiah from Israel from the loins of Abraham and He gives him right here in between this and the law, He gives them the rite of circumcision. So what you have is on this time line, you have a people and I’m just going to put a box around them. You have a people in those people are the nation of Israel. All the other people in the world, so to speak, are uncircumcised you say, “But I circumcised my boy.” Yes, it’s a good health move but in that day circumcision was a rite. Circumcision was a sign of covenant so that as the paternity came forth from Abraham, it came forth through his seed from one generation to another generation and circumcision is a cut made in the closest sight of paternity in this to show that it is passed from one generation to another among the Jews. So everybody outside of this, everybody outside these people are Gentiles. And so there’s a whole world of Gentiles here that belong to the nations. All right now, what Paul is saying is after Jesus Christ came, after Jesus Christ died and he’s explaining what Jesus Christ did in

His death and how He removed the enmity of the law, how He abolished in His flesh the enmity of the law that separated the Jews from the Gentiles. Now Paul has been given this ministry and this ministry is to go out and to tell the world, to tell the Gentiles, “Hey, you can belong to God. You can not only belong to God but you can be a fellow heir, you can be a fellow citizen with all the people that belong to this one new man, to this new entity on the face of this earth. And that new entity is the body of Jesus Christ, it is the church of Jesus Christ. And the body of Jesus Christ and the church of Jesus Christ welcomes people from every single nation, every single language group. Now this word for fellow in the Greek is syn, s-y-n and it really is attached to citizens, it’s attached to heirs. It’s a word that means this. That you, now watch, you are combined. So just think of me taking my two hands and intertwining my fingers. This is what he’s talking about. He says you are fellow heirs. You are fellow citizens. Now there are two kind of prepositions that can go with a word. One is meta and meta means to join but it means that you group them together. It’s like baking a cake. You get the ingredients. You have the eggs. You have the milk. You have the flower. You have the chocolate or whatever you’re going to put into it or the nuts. They’re all there separate. They’re all going to be part of the cake. The preposition there would be meta. They’re individual but they’re going to be combined. But the minute that they are combined, they are no longer individual and this is so important but they’re part of the whole cake. I mean once you mix in the milk, the eggs, the flours and the nuts and whatever else you’re going to put in that cake, you can’t get it out. It is all combined. That’s what fellow means and what God is saying to you and God is saying to me is this. This is the doctrine of the church. This is the mystery that has been hidden all these ages because all through the ages the Jews thought it was just them. All through the ages the Gentiles were strangers. They were aliens and and they were outside this these promises. But now in Christ Jesus, you have been brought near. This is the mystery and Paul says, “It

was revealed to me even as it was revealed to the holy apostles and revealed to the prophets.” (Paraphrase, Ephesians 3:5b) All this time, all these 4,000 years if you go back to Genesis and you do the time line all these 4,000 years leading up to the fullness of time when God sent forth His Son in the world, there were Jews and Gentiles. But once Jesus Christ came, now we’re part of the church and what does that mean? We’ll see it in just a moment.

PART TWO

Welcome back, Beloved. I love teaching you the Word of God and I love hearing from you and what God is doing in your life as a result of studying God’s Word, discovering truth for yourself. Don’t forget, there’s a free study guide. So go to our website “preceptsforlife.com” and there you can not only discover that free study guide but you can also discover many other things about Precept Ministries International. We’re teaching these truths in 121 countries. We are teaching them in over 67 languages. People are studying the Word of God. They’re growing. They’re awed because of what they’re learning. Well, let’s look at this piece of paper that you are drawing and as you draw then you’re learning. Remember we have a cross on there. Before the cross, we have father Abraham. We have Moses on Mount Sinai getting the 10 Commandments and we box them in and I put a star of David over them to show that this is Israel. Then we put stick figures on each side of that box to show that there are Gentiles that were not part of the nation of Israel. Now it wasn’t until the apostles came to a certain experience that it was revealed to them that God was not only going to save the Jews, that Jesus was not only the Messiah of the Jews but Jesus was a Messiah of the Gentiles also. Now remember Paul says when he writes to those at Rome, **“...I am not ashamed of the gospel, [of Jesus Christ] ...it is the power of God [unto] salvation to everyone who believes...,”** but now watch what he says, **“...to the Jew first and [then] to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16)** So

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what does he mean when he says “the Jew first”? What did Jesus mean when He said to the Syro-Phoenician woman? [”I’m sorry. I didn’t come to you. I came to the Jews] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 15:24) and she said, [“But even the dogs get the crumbs that fall off of the table] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 15:27) and He says, [“I’m impressed with your faith. Your daughter is healed.”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 15:28) What does it mean to the Jew first? Well, we’re going to put a stick figure on the other side of the cross as you look at it on your paper to the right of the cross and that stick figure I put in blue to represent a Jew. Were the Gentiles saved at the same time and know this is what I want you to see. It was ten years later. Ten years after Pentecost that the Gentiles came to know Jesus Christ. So I’m putting down ten years and then here is another stick figure in another color and that represents the Gentiles. People from every tribe and tongue and nation and you can find that in Revelation chapter 5. But what I want us to do is I want us to go to Acts because I want you to see this. So why do I say ten years later? Well if you will go with me to Acts chapter 10, Acts chapter 10. Now you’re going to have to read this and put yourself in context. But this is when Peter is in Joppa or Yafo is what they call it and Peter is in Yafo and [he has a vision and this vision is a sheet of filled with unclean animals and the Lord tells them to kill those and to cook them and to eat them. And Peter says, “I’ve never touched anything unclean.” And God says to him, listen very carefully. “What I have called cleaned, don’t you call unclean.” (PARAPHRASE, Acts 10:11-14) Don’t you call them unclean and he really didn’t understand that but he says what I have made clean, don’t you call unclean. Well then there’s a knock at the door and it’s a servant of a centurian, Cornelius, that lives in Ceasarea. Down from Joppa on the coast this port city that the Romans used and where they had a lot of the centurions because remember Romans were occupying the land of Israel during the time of Jesus and after the time of Jesus. And so this centurion’s servant comes and knocks on the door and says, [“Will you come and see

my master?”] (PARAPHRASE, Acts 10:22) And so he goes down to see his master and when he gets there to see his master he walks, a Jew who a circumcised man walks into the home of an uncircumcised man, a man who was clean walks into the house of a man who is considered by the Jews up to this time unclean. And Peter then begins to preach and this is what he says, **“...I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality.” (Acts 10:34b)** God’s not going to be prejudiced. **“But in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.” (Acts 10:35)** And then he says, **“The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ....” (Acts 10:36)** Now we know from Ephesians chapter 2 that when Jesus died on that cross He abolished the enmity and He made peace between Jew and Gentile. And it says, **“You yourselves know the thing which took place [through] all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the...Spirit and with the power....” (Acts 10:37-38a)** And then he tells how God crucified Him, how God raised Him from the dead and then in verse 42, **“And He ordered us to preach to the people, ...solemnly [testifying] that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.” (Acts 10:42)** And then it says, **“While Peter was speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell [on them].... (Acts 10:44a)** The Holy Spirit fell on the uncircumcised and it says in verse 45, **“[And] All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift...,” the gift, “...of the Holy Spirit....” (Acts 10:45a)** Take out that hanky, Kay. The gift of the Holy Spirit had not only been given to the Jews as it happened at the day of Pentecost but now for the first time, ten years after Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was given to the Gentiles. **“Now the apostles...,”** go to chapter 11, **“...and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles...received the word of God. And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those who were circumcised took issue with**

him, saying, **‘You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.’**”
(Acts 11:1-3) What do you see? They’re prejudiced. You have gone to an uncircumcised man. You have eaten with them. Why? Because they are still thinking law and they aren’t understanding the mystery of the church which is Jew and Gentile. They aren’t understanding that Jesus Christ in His body, in His death took care of the enmity and so now this glorious news of the gospel is open not only to Jews but it is open to Gentiles and so ten years later you have the first Gentiles that come into the body of Christ and what you see as you look at this is you see this glorious, glorious salvation of the Gentiles and Peter’s relating this now to these people. It says, **“...Peter began [to speak to them and began] to explain to them...,”** (Acts 11:4a) and he says and he’s telling about what happened. He says, **“...As I [spoke] the Holy Spirit fell [on] them just as He did [on] us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Therefore if God [has given] to them the same gift as He gave to us ...after believing in...Jesus..., who was I that I [should] stand in [their] way?’ [And] When they heard this, they quieted down and [they] glorified God, saying, ‘Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.’”**(Acts 11:15-18) Now when you go back to Ephesians you see that Paul says in Ephesians chapter 3 that he **“...was made a minister...”** to bring to the Gentiles the glorious message of the gospel. (Ephesians 3:7) And you know what? What Paul’s ministry was is yours now. You and I are commissioned to take this message to the nations. Don’t be prejudiced against them. Beloved, proclaim Jesus and see God bring men and women from every tribe and tongue and nation to Himself.