

7. THE SECRET OF HIS WILL *IN* CHRIST

In many parts, and many ways, God of old having spoken to the fathers in the prophets, **in these last days did speak to us in a Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He did make the ages.... (Hebrews 1.1-2 YLT) ¹

By many portions and many modes, of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets, **in the last of these days speaks to us in a Son**, Whom He appoints enjoyer of the allotment of all, through Whom **He also makes the eons**.... (Hebrews 1.1-2 cv)

It is no secret that the Old Testament reveals the purpose and plan of God in many parts and in many ways as penned by the prophets. However, in these last days, which began over 2,000 years ago when God's Son came to this earth, God speaks to us in His Son, who is our Lord Jesus Christ. What does Christ speak? He speaks the full revelation of God's purpose and plan. How will God's purpose and plan be accomplished? It will be done through the Son who is appointed heir of all. By what means will God's purpose and plan be manifested, that is, begin and end? It will be manifested through the eons, which are made by the Son; the Origin and the Consummation of all, even the eons.

In the New Testament, secrets are revealed that had been concealed from the eons and the generations. The prophets saw something of God's purpose, but they mainly saw it in bits and pieces, in types and in shadows. They had a limited and often veiled view that did not see the full panorama of God's purpose and plan. It took the arrival to this earth of the Son of God and the raising up of a very unlikely Hebrew named Saul (later called Paul), who proclaimed that he was the foremost of sinners (1 Timothy 1.15), to unveil some of the most profound truths of God and to bring the full panorama of God's purpose and plan into view.

Musterion—secret.

What does it mean that secrets are revealed? The Greek word *musterion* appears twenty-seven times and is most often translated as the word *mystery* (e.g., ASV, DNT, GB, HNV, KJV, LITV, MKJV, NASB, WAET); however, a few translations most often use the word *secret* (e.g., ALT, CV, REB, WNT, YLT). ² *Musterion* means "close-keep" or "that which was once kept closed and withheld but now is revealed." Some commenta-

¹ Many translations use the word *world* instead of the words *ages* or *eons*; however, this is not accurate. These words are translated from the Greek word *aiōn*, which usually refers to a *long period of time punctuated by a major change in the earth or in the moral condition or judgment of man*. Each long period of time has a beginning and is punctuated by an end. The word *eon* is the Anglicized form of the transliterated Greek word *aiōn*.

² Some translations use either of the words. For example, the WNT uses the word *secret* in Romans 11.25 but uses the word *mystery* in Romans 16.25.

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tors have made a point about the use of one word over the other, but I prefer the word *secret*. *Mystery* implies something that remains so secretive, so unknown or so unexplained that it remains hidden and is not revealed. Ancient cults used the term for their initiation rites; one had to be initiated into their mysteries. In this context, that which is hidden becomes mysterious. On the other hand, *secret* simply means “to keep or conceal some knowledge from others”; a secret is concealed from sight or notice; it is hidden until revealed.

Of the twenty-six times the word *secret* appears in Greek Scripture, nineteen of those times occur in Paul’s writings (Romans 11.25; 16.25; 1 Corinthians 2.7; 4.1; 13.2; 14.2; 15.51; Ephesians 1.9; 3.3, 4, 9; 5.32; 6.19; Colossians 1.26, 27; 2.2; 4.3; 2 Thessalonians 2.7; 1 Timothy 3.16). Other citations are found in the gospels in reference to the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens (Matthew 13.11; Mark 4.11; Luke 8.10) and in the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1.20; 10.7; 17.5, 7).

Paul’s use of the word *secret* is significant to his testimony, for the Lord Jesus opened the windows of heaven for him to pull together the bits and pieces and the types and shadows that had been revealed to the Hebrew prophets. As a Hebrew of Hebrews, Paul knew what was revealed to the ancient prophets as recorded in the sacred Scriptures that any devout Hebrew would have known in that day. We can only imagine the reaction of this once-proud Pharisee when the eyes of his *spiritual* heart were opened to see the secrets of God *in* Christ in fullness.

Now, although Scripture refers to several secrets, or if you prefer, mysteries, all the secrets are contained or summed up in one secret, and that is Christ. In particular, the secrets that are revealed through Paul start in the person of Christ Jesus, our Lord. Christ is the secret of God, who, we could say, sums up all the facets of God’s secrets revealed through the eons. If we search for the secrets in any place or in anyone other than Christ, we will never know the secrets of God. Thank God the secret of Christ has now been made known!

The secret of the Christ.

Paul asked for prayer that he might discharge the secret of Christ. He even struggled over this secret, so that the ecclesias would come into a realization of it.

In prayer be persevering, watching in it with thanksgiving, praying at the same time concerning us also, that God should be opening for us a door of the word, to speak **the secret of Christ**, because of which I am bound also, that I should be making it manifest, as I must speak. (Colossians 4.2-4 cv)

For I want you to perceive what **the struggle** amounts to which I am having for your sakes and for those in Laodicea, and whoever have not seen my face in flesh, that their hearts may be consoled, being united in love, and to all the riches of the assurance of understanding, unto a realization of **the secret of the God and Father, of Christ, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed.** (Colossians 2.1-3 cv)

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Notice that it is the secret of the God and Father, of Christ. In other words, it is God's secret, and it pertains to His Son, the Anointed or Messiah. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed in Christ. He is the wisdom and all the knowledge of God. Earlier, Paul had written to the Corinthians: *Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God* (1 Corinthians 1.24 NASB). Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for knowledge, but Christ crucified is a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the unbelieving gentiles or nations (1 Corinthians 1.22-23). Neither will discover what really matters in this life unless they discover Christ. However, it takes the spirit of God to open the eyes of anyone to see the depths of the secret of God that is in Christ.

There is so much hidden in Christ that it is supposed that we will be forever discovering the breadth and length and height and depth of the wisdom and the knowledge concealed in Christ. He is *the Alpha* and *the Omega* (Revelation 1.8), which speaks of the complete alphabet or language of God. Words are used to express wisdom and knowledge, but Christ is the very Word of God. He is the full expression of God. He is the full complement of God. He is the all of God.

Words seem to come short in expressing the very essence of the secret of Christ. Is it any wonder that Paul asked for prayer for doors to be opened to speak forth the secret of Christ? He prayed for the Ephesians that the eyes of their heart would be enlightened to perceive their calling in relation to the secret of Christ. We all need the spirit of God to open the eyes of our heart to understand and see more clearly.

Now, we could say that in the secret of Christ are concealed several secrets, as unveiled by Paul.

The Headship of Christ.

The foremost of the secrets revealed to Paul is that Christ is Head of all, and He will head up all until He is all in all. We could say that this is the sum total of all the secrets (as well as the purpose of God), for all are begun in Christ, revealed in Christ, manifested in Christ, and consummated in Christ as Head.

The Headship of Christ is vitally joined to Christ, the Head of the ecclesia, which is His body. Paul has so intertwined this joining in his epistles that it is difficult to discuss Christ's Headship alone. However, to fully appreciate the place the body of Christ holds in God's purpose in Christ, we need to see Christ alone in His exalted place as Head over all. To do this, at this point, specific references to Christ as the Head of the ecclesia are excluded, to be taken up after we see Christ as the universal Head.

To be clear, Paul was not alone in seeing the exalted position of Christ. John saw Jesus Christ in His place as the Suzerain of the kings of the earth and as the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 1.5; 19.16). Peter saw Jesus Christ at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels (messengers) and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him (1 Peter 3.22 NASB). This is the

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Headship of Christ, which the Lord Himself declared to His disciples as He was about to ascend back to His Father: *All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth* (Matthew 28.18 NASB).

However, Paul never knew Jesus in His earthly life as John and Peter had known Him. Paul came to know Christ in His risen and glorified life among the celestials. He saw Christ Jesus, not Jesus Christ³ seated in the heights of glory as the Head of the entire universe and creation of God. Paul saw the universal Headship of Christ, the all-encompassing nature of Christ.

Making known to us **the secret of His will** (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—**both that in the heavens and that on the earth....** (Ephesians 1.9-10 cv)

Two other translations of the same verses add to the depth of God's will in Christ.

God has now revealed to us **His mysterious plan regarding Christ**, a plan to fulfill His own good pleasure. And this is the plan: At the right time He will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—**everything in heaven and on earth.** (Ephesians 1.9-10 NLT)

Granting us complete insight and understanding of **the open secret of his will**, showing us how it was the purpose of his design so to order it in the fullness of the ages that **all things in heaven and earth alike should be gathered up in Christ....** (Ephesians 1.9-10 JMT)

Notice that it is the secret of God's will, which God has purposed in Christ. It is God's plan of the eons or ages that must be and will be carried out in His Son. It is not a coincidence or a correction of something that went bad. It is all according to God's design in order to fulfill His good pleasure. Consequently, God's purpose is to head up or gather up all in the heavens and on the earth in the Christ. This includes everything, for there is no territory and no created being left out of His Headship. At the right time, which is at the consummation of the eons, everything will finally be brought under the authority of Christ.

Today, our Lord Jesus is seated at God's right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending. God the Father subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as **Head over all** (see Ephesians 1.20-22 cv). We must be abundantly clear that His Headship is not for one exclusive group of people or created beings, but it is for all God's creation. God's Son has ascended and is seated at God's right hand, and is over all.

³ **Jesus Christ** speaks of His *humiliation* on earth before and including the cross and is used most often by the apostles of the circumcision to refer to Christ's coming earthly reign. **Christ Jesus** speaks of His *exaltation* in glory after the cross, and Paul used it most often to refer to Christ's universal reign.

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He Who descends is the Same Who ascends also, **up over all** who are of the heavens, that **He should be completing all**. (Ephesians 4.10 cv)

The purpose of the eons is summed up in these words: To head up all in the Christ, all in the heavens and on the earth. This leaves no place in God's creation exempt from His Headship. Also, notice that, according to Paul, Christ is up over all who are in the heavens. Thus, He is not merely the Head, as if He is among those in the heavens, but He is *up over* all who are in the heavens. In other words, as Head, Christ is far above all. There is nothing or no one above Him in His Headship as purposed in the secret of God's will.

Christ is all.

The word to sum up Paul's revelation is the word *all*. Simply, Christ is *all*. There is nothing left out of His Headship, and there is nothing beyond His Headship. It is God's will and wisdom that His Son be exalted above all; to encompass all, to fill all, to head up all and to be all in all. He is the one completing the all in all.

We see this most clearly in Paul's epistle to the Colossians, which he wrote to correct error that was creeping in that placed Christ at a lower level with the angels (Colossians 2.18), and that challenged Christ's Headship through the philosophy of men. The Colossians were in danger of falling captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ (Colossians 2.8 NASB). Is this danger any less so in our day? Hardly! It is probably just as prevalent, if not more so.

According to Webster's dictionary, *philosophy* is "the processes governing thought and conduct; theory or investigation of the principles or laws that regulate the universe and underlie all knowledge and reality." Philosophy as embraced by lost mankind might sound good, but Paul warned against its deception. Why? It is the thinking and wisdom of man and not the wisdom of God! Christ is not man's philosophy. If one wants to know what regulates the universe, one needs to see Christ. Paul contrasted all these things of the earth and man with that which is in accord with Christ. Christ is the answer to all mankind's questions about the universe. Who in our day is searching out the unfathomable wisdom of Christ in search of mankind's questions about the universe? Only the Lord knows!

Paul declared that the substance belongs to Christ. The Colossians were in danger of chasing after shadows, things that are in the gray zone of life and not in the brightness of the glory of Christ. They were following after self-made religion manifested in such things as festivals and eating restrictions. Consider Paul's answer to these shadows.

Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no

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one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not **holding fast to the head**, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. (Colossians 2.16-19 NASB)

The answer is to hold fast the Head, which is Christ. The growth of the entire body of Christ is from God. The Headship of Christ is the answer.

The Colossians were living as if they had not died with Christ but instead were living according to the elementary principles of the world system (*kosmos*). The answer to this crisis is Christ. Paul declared that they had been raised up with Christ; they were beyond the pale of this world system that was trying to drag them down to its fleshly level. The religious world says to submit oneself to decrees and all will be well. But Paul wrote that this is merely self-made religion and self-abasement that has no power or value against fleshly indulgences. What is the answer? You have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. You have been raised up with Christ, who is our life; therefore, set your mind on above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Get your mind off the world system and on Christ in glory, for when He is revealed, we will be revealed with Him in glory (see Colossians 2.20-3.4). Hallelujah!

There is only one way to correct error; we must see the inclusiveness of Christ as the *all* of God. Christ in His Headship is the answer to the many perplexing questions we might have about the universe or the **world system** or **kosmos** in which we live.

The inclusive Christ.

Now, in Paul's epistle, we see the full depth of Christ's Headship of all in several verses.

Christ—Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him.that in all He may be becoming first.... (Colossians 1.15-17; 18 cv)

First, we see Christ as **the Image of the invisible God**, and in Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily (Colossians 2.9 cv). If we want to see God, then we must see His Son, for He is the full expression of God, who is invisible. There is no other way. Is there anything more inclusive than this?

Second, we see Christ as **the Firstborn of every creature**. Do not miss the import of this fact. Christ is not only the Firstborn of mankind but of all God's creatures, in the heavens and on the earth. From our view on earth and in this

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physical world, we have little comprehension of all the creatures that are in God's kingdom. Our view may be limited, but this has no bearing on Christ's exalted place among God's creation. Even what remains invisible to us is created by Christ.

The universe did not start in chaos; it started *in* Christ. Notice how Paul stated that *in* Him is *all* created. This is more than just an inventor of material objects. It is *in* Him that all is created. Scientists expend great energy and resources trying to unravel the secrets of the universe. However, the secrets are hidden *in* Christ, and without Christ the scientists of the world will never truly understand the universe. The entire visible and invisible realm of the universe can only be explained *in* Christ, for it all came forth from Him, through Him, by and for Him.

Third, we see Christ not only as the Creator of all but ***the Creator of all that governs His creatures***, that is, all thrones, lordships, sovereignties and authorities.

Fourth, as if to be sure we get the import of Christ, Paul declared that ***all is created through Him and for Him***. In other words, He is not an absent Creator, as if He creates and then walks away from His creation. Never! Creation is not only through Him but for Him.

Fifth, again Paul brings us back to before the eons and before creation itself. ***Christ is before all***. Paul wanted the Colossian believers and us today to know that there is nothing beyond Christ. One will search in vain to find anything or anyone that precedes Christ.

Sixth, ***all creation has its cohesion in Christ***. In other words, Christ holds all together. He is the very life and, we could say, glue of creation. In the Hebrews epistle, we are told that He upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1.3 NASB); other translations declare that He holds the universe together (CEV), holds everything together (GW), and sustains all things (HCSB).

The preeminent Christ.

Seventh, the purpose of God begins in Christ and continues in Christ as the plan of God is unfolded in the eons, so that Christ may be becoming first in all. Some translations use the word *preeminence*: ***That in all things he might have the preeminence*** (Colossians 1.18 ASV). Things of this world can be predominant, that is, have a great influence or authority, but preeminence is much more than this. *Preeminence* means to surpass and excel above all others. This is the exalted position of Christ. He surpasses all, is above all, is over all, and in the consummation will be in all. If we could travel the entire universe to discover that which stands out among everything in God's creation, we would discover that nothing surpasses God's Son.

What is the sum of all this? It is that Christ is the universal Head of all—all creatures, all government, all that there is. God's entire plan is manifested so that

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His Son is preeminent in all. Today, parts of creation might reject this fact or live as if it were not true; but it is true, and one day all in God's creation will come to the knowledge of the greatness of God's Son, to the glory of God the Father. Today, every knee has not bowed and every tongue has not confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord, and everything has not been subjected to Christ. But the day will come when all this will change, and He alone will be preeminent in all as the Head of all.

This is the greatness and the glory of Christ. Christ is all!

With this glorious revelation sealed in our hearts, we can proceed to the next facet of the secret of Christ, and that pertains to Christ as Head of all in relation to the ecclesia, which is His body.

The Head of the body, the ecclesia.

And subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as **Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body**, the complement of **the One completing the all in all**. (Ephesians 1.22-23 cv)

And he has put everything under his feet and set him as **head over everything for the church, the church which is his Body**, filled by him who fills **the entire universe**. (Ephesians 1.22-23 JMT)

The key to this verse is that Christ is the Head over all, which means that nothing is left out. Simply, His Headship encompasses everything. God subjects all under the feet of Christ, making Him Head over all. Christ fills the entire universe. He is the universal Head over all!

Then, in the capacity of Head over all, God gives Christ to the ecclesia, which is His body. Do not miss the glory of this secret hidden from the generations and the eons. In this present eon, God has chosen a *called-out* people to be given to the One who is the Head of the universe. They have been joined with the One who is now seated at the right hand of God the Father among the celestials. As far as we can discern, no one in all God's creation has been given such a high and glorious privilege as that given to the ecclesia, which is Christ's body.

Some translations of these verses place all the emphasis of Christ's Headship on the "church," which greatly diminishes His Headship of the entire universe. They make it appear that Christ was made simply head of the "church," or that He was made head for the good of the "church," or that He was made head over all the "church." Although these are truths, they nevertheless miss the mark of the universality of Christ's Headship and actually diminish the on-high, celestial calling of the ecclesia, which is His body. The "church" has been raised up and seated with the Head of the universe, which places the "church" over all the universe with Christ; and in this capacity of Head and body, Christ will sum up all things in heaven and on earth. Christ has not come down to be the Head of the "church." He has raised His body to be among the celestials, joined with Him as Head over all.

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The complement of Christ.

The greatness of Christ and His body is seen in Paul's declaration that the body is also His complement. *Complement* refers to something that fills completely. It is not merely a partial filling but a complete filling. In other words, the body is to be full of Christ and to be so full that it is the very image of Christ, just as Christ is the image of God. He fills His body with His very Life—His resurrection and conquering life. The ecclesia, which is the body, is the complement of the One who will fill the entire universe with Himself until He is all in all in all God's creation.

But there is more, for *complement* also means *fulfillment*. The word *fulfill* means "to carry out (something promised, desired, expected, predicted); cause to be or happen," "to fill the requirements of; satisfy a condition; answer a purpose," "to bring to an end; complete."

Do you realize that the body is to bring fulfillment to Christ as well? In other words, the Son needs the body in order for Him to be complete, so that He can bring about the purpose and plan of God. Just as the first Adam needed a helpmate to join him in having dominion over the earth, so must the last Adam have a helpmate. Adam was not complete without Eve, and Christ is not complete without His body. The ecclesia, which is the body of Christ, is intimately joined with Christ, the Head, and without this joining together Christ will not be complete, and God's purpose will not be accomplished. The Son of God needs His body in order to head up all things in heaven and on earth.

Take a moment to reflect on this truth. It is almost beyond comprehension for those who have been given to Christ, the Head over all.

Paul added to this glorious truth in his epistle to the Colossians.

And He is **the Head of the body, the ecclesia**, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell.... (Colossians 1.18-19 cv)

He is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, which is joined with the One who is Sovereign. Think about it; if you are a member of the body of Christ, you are joined to the Sovereign of the universe, the One who is over all, in all, before all and who holds all together. Not only this, but you are joined with the One who is beyond death, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality (1 Timothy 6.15-16). He has conquered death, the very enemy of mankind. He is the Firstborn of the dead, and because of His glorious victory, His body will live and also conquer death in His life. He is the Resurrection and the Life.

Beloved in Christ, do not allow the greatness of the secret revealed to Paul to become something common to you. Today, there is much talk about the body of Christ; but there is a danger that the body becomes merely another Christian term

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that is bantered about and over time loses its greatness, just like the word *church* has lost its *out-called* meaning.

Part of the danger comes from the fact that Paul referred to the body in two ways. To be clear, there is only one body (Ephesians 4.4), and yet, we could say, Paul dealt with the body from two angles.

The first angle is the relationship of the body to the universal Headship of Christ. The body of Christ is the first of mankind, in this present eon, to come under the resurrected Christ as Head. Over the next two eons, all mankind will be brought under His Headship.

So also is the Christ.

The second angle is the relationship of the members of the body to one another, which is described in 1 Corinthians 12. The body in this relationship is seen by Paul as including the head. It would be very unusual for any of us to describe our own body and leave out our head. A head alone is not a body any more than a headless body is a body. In other words, the head is part of the body just as much as the feet are part of the body. A few verses from Paul's epistle make the point.

For the human body does not consist of one part, but of many. Were the foot to say, "Because I am not a hand I am not a part of the body," that would not make it any the less a part of the body. Or were the ear to say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," that would not make it any the less a part of the body. **If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the nostrils be?** But, as a matter of fact, God has arranged the parts in the body—every one of them—as He has seen fit. **If they were all one part, where would the body be? But, as a matter of fact, there are many parts and but one body.** (1 Corinthians 12.14-20 WNT)

Notice how Paul included the ear and the eye in the body, which are parts of the head. In this context, Christ is not presented as the Head of the body. The fact of the matter is that Paul actually saw Christ as the whole body.

For, even as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, **so also is the Christ....** (1 Corinthians 12.12 YLT)

So also is the Christ means that the entire body is one body in Christ; it is His body and there are members that, metaphorically speaking, also include functions similar to those that come through the head, like seeing, hearing and speaking.

The point that I want to impress upon your heart is that the Headship of Christ as the Sovereign of the universe transcends the whole matter of the functioning of the body of Christ in this present eon. The functioning of the body is vital and essential

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for us today in the building up of the body in love, and this obviously has great implications for individuals appearing before the bema of Christ (2 Corinthians 5.10). This is all within the plan of God. However, the body of Christ that is given to the Christ, who is the Sovereign of all, has far greater implications for the next eon and beyond.

This leads to the next aspect of the secret that was concealed from the eons but revealed to Paul, and that is the celestial nature of the body of Christ.

Among the celestials.

In his Ephesians epistle, Paul referred to the celestials in five verses. Most translations use the phrase *heavenly places* or *heavenly realms* or simply the word *heavenlies*. In the Greek, the word is *epouranion*, which refers to that part of the universe that is on, or higher than. The concordant method has chosen the word *celestial* to distinguish it from the word *heaven*, which comes from the Greek word *ouranos*. *Heaven* implies what is seen when looking up and *celestial* implies what is beyond the heavens; thus, it is *higher than*. But what does this mean? Is it merely a place further out in the universe, or is it something more than material matter or physical space?

It is probably a safe assumption that when most of us think of the location of God's throne we often think in terms of physical space, and we place God's throne someplace in the far reaches of the universe or even outside of the universe. However, the phrase *among the celestials*, or *in the heavenly places*, most likely implies something far different from the physical universe as we see it with our natural eyes and mind.

Today, science states that we live in a space-time dimensional universe. It is referred to as a "space-time continuum" comprised of three dimensions of space (i.e., height, width and depth, or longitude, latitude and elevation, or the coordinates x, y and z), and one dimension of time. However, God and those among the celestials are in another dimension obviously not restricted by the dimensions that we know. Consider Jesus after His resurrection but before His final ascension back to His Father's throne. He appeared to His disciples in a form that they did not recognize and also appeared to them behind shut doors, much to their surprise (Luke 24.13-35, 36-37; John 20.14, 19, 26). Or, consider the angels that are ministering spirits for the sake of those who inherit salvation (Hebrews 1.14). We do not see with our physical eyes the angels that might be ministering all around us. Or, consider the unseen powers of darkness, which are among the celestials as well. The body of Christ is in spiritual battle with *the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials* (Ephesians 6.12 cv). For those who are spiritual, the pressure of these forces is discerned in spirit, and not necessarily discerned (not ruled out either) by seeing or feeling in the physical sense.

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Given these few examples, we could safely assume that being among the celestials is something far greater and different from what we know and experience on earth in our physical bodies. Let us not forget that our God is spirit and among the celestials, and that no one can see God.

Just as our earth is suspended in space that surrounds it, most of which we cannot see from earth, we too could be suspended in a celestial realm that surrounds us, none of which we can see while in our bodies of death. We must be constituted as spiritual, celestial, immortal beings in order to enter the celestial realm. This is to be our grandest hope and expectation.

Now, let us look at the verses that refer to being among the celestials.

First, Christ is among the celestials. In referring to the transcendent greatness of the power of God, Paul wrote: Which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and *seating Him at His right hand among the celestials*, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending (Ephesians 1.20-21 cv). God has seated His Son at His right hand among the celestials, which means that there is no greater position in all God's creation.

Second, there are spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials that are in a spiritual battle with the body of Christ. Therefore, we are exhorted to take up the panoply of God that we may be enabled to withstand in the wicked day, and having effected all, to stand (Ephesians 6.12-13 cv). One might wonder how there could be spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials. Contrary to popular belief, the wicked forces are not in some fiery chamber in the earth torturing people; they are among the celestials. Job speaks of the sons of God or messengers of God having access to the throne of God (Job 1.6; 2.1). In the Revelation, we are told that Satan is the accuser of the brethren, accusing them before God day and night (Revelation 12.10). How else could he do this unless he has access to the throne?

Also, Paul wrote that the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials. This knowledge is directly related to the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons (Ephesians 3.9-11). In other words, the secret that has been concealed is to be revealed to God's created celestial beings that have been placed in positions of power in the rule of God's kingdom.

Third, and most importantly to us, we come to the last two references to being among the celestials, and both refer to the body of Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials**, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, **in love designating us beforehand for**

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the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved.... (Ephesians 1.3-6 cv)

Paul began his epistle with this glorious declaration of blessing. He started by blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then he declared the reason for the blessing. God has blessed *us*, that is, the body of Christ, with every spiritual blessing among the celestials. This was something that God determined to do before the earth was brought into the disruption that ended the first eon and before mankind was created on the restored earth that began the second eon. God chose in Christ a vessel that is called the body of Christ to be holy and flawless as sons of God, all according to His grace in Christ. This was all according to God's purpose, for God is love, and He designated, before mankind even existed, a people to come into this spiritual blessing among the celestials as sons of God. No wonder it is to the laud of the glory of His grace.

Holy Spirit of promise.

Notice that this is a spiritual blessing for today, not just for the next eon; it is an assurance of our destiny among the celestials. Paul gives us the assurance of the inheritance.

In whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom, having also believed, **ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance**, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1.13-14 ASV)

When we first believe, the spirit of God not only takes up residence in us, but we also are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. What is the promise?

Yet God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and **seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus**, that, **in the oncoming eons**, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them. (Ephesians 2.4-10 cv)

In God's vast love, we are saved only by His grace and not by works. Works have no place in this glorious salvation of Christ that leads us into immortality. Works have a role to play in our *eonian* rewards and God's purpose after we are saved but not in relation to salvation itself. We are justified by grace, for Christ was raised because of our justification (Romans 4.25 NASB).

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For those of us who are saved during this present wicked eon, there is only one word—**Grace!** For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you. Faith is not even ours; it is the faith of the Son of God that saves us, not our faith. As Paul wrote: I live by faith, **the faith of the Son of God**, who has loved me and given himself for me (Galatians 2.20 DNT). If we live by the faith of the Son of God, what makes us think that we are saved by our own faith? Christ is the Inaugurator or Originator and the Perfecter or Finisher of faith (Hebrews 12.2 CV/ALT/MKJV). It is His faith from the beginning to the end. This all speaks of *the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

Even the good works, after we are saved, are *in* Christ. They were even prepared beforehand that we should be walking in them. Perhaps, these good works are actually the works that will be done by the body of Christ when we are spiritually seated among the celestials. In some measure, we walk in them today; but in the next eon, we will fully enter into them as the complement of the One who fills the universe entirely, in heaven and on earth. In a sense, we cannot do all the good works in this day because we have been given only **an earnest of the spirit**; we have not received the full measure of the spirit or anointing that will enable us to do the greater works.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and **greater works than these he will do**; because I go to the Father.” (John 14.12 NASB)

There is no doubt that the best is yet to come, and it will come when the conquerors of Christ are filled with the Holy Spirit as they are glorified as Christ is glorified (Philippians 3.21). It is when the saints receive glorified bodies in the next eon that the greater works will be manifested in the fullest measure. Until that day, we groan in these bodies of death, along with all creation, as all wait for the revealing of the sons of God (Romans 8.20-25).

In accord with the purpose of the eons, the ecclesia, which is His body, will be a glorious expression of Christ and the love of God in Christ throughout the empyrean of God, which refers to the highest heavens.

Dear brethren, do you see the magnificence of the grace of God in Christ? We can expend great amounts of energy trying to get people saved and trying to do works that we think will please God, but it is all in vain if it is apart from grace, through faith, in Christ.

Seated among the celestials.

Now, we come to the most glorious part of the secret evangel, for it reveals the destiny of the body of Christ. God **seats us together among the celestials**, in Christ Jesus, that, **in the oncoming eons**, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

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Spiritually speaking, the body of Christ is among the celestials today. This high privilege must be **discerned in spirit** and **held by faith**. Those who have been called out as the body of Christ in this eon have the Holy Spirit of promise that guarantees that a day is coming when the body will be transfigured into conformity with the body of His glory and will be seated among the celestials. The spirit of God is *an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured*. This glorious destiny has been procured in Christ. Again, notice that the spirit is an earnest, which means that it is like a down payment; it has not been given in full measure yet, which comes on the eighth day of the Tabernacles Feast (John 7.37-38). Being sealed with the Holy Spirit is a promise from God that the body of Christ is destined to enter the spiritual, celestial realm, to enjoy an inheritance or an allotment in the kingdom of God. Until that day, we are to be enjoyers of the celestial destiny that we have in Christ by tasting what is to come, knowing full well that we are not there yet.

But how do we know in spirit that we are seated among the celestials? For all who are truly born from above, there is one sure proof of this spiritual fact. We increasingly sense that we no longer belong to this earth. We feel separated from the things of this earth. The things of this earth grow strangely dim! Things of this world that once seemed so much a part of us are no longer important, even relevant. We find ourselves groaning within as if we long to be set free from this world system that is in so much bondage (see Romans 8.22-23; Philippians 3.20; Colossians 3.1-4; 1 John 2.15-17). Are you groaning in this last hour?

Now, do not think that being among the celestials means that the saints will leave this old world behind, as many Christians seem to believe today. It is taught by some that when the Lord Jesus comes for His people, they will leave this earth, never to return. This is not true. Being among the celestials in glorified bodies, beyond death, is what will allow the saints to minister in both the celestial and physical or earthly realms.

Do you realize that **the saints will one day judge the world and the messengers or angels** (1 Corinthians 6.2, 3)? The word *judge* does not mean to condemn, as in sentencing; it means to set things right. In other words, the saints will set things right for the world (inhabitants of the earth) and among the celestials during the coming eons. As the complement of the One completing the all in all, the body of Christ will be intimately involved with the heading up of all things in Christ.

Can you imagine what this means? It is beyond one's wildest dreams. What is the purpose of the eons? It is to sum up all in the heavens and on the earth until Christ is all in all. This means that Christ must exercise His Headship over every millimeter and every subatomic particle of God's creation. When He has subjected all under His feet, including abolishing the last enemy, death, and has become all in all in all of God's vast universe, both invisible and visible, then the Son will deliver up the kingdom to His God and Father, so that God may be *All* in all (1 Corinthians 15.24-28).

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The secret evangel that was concealed from the eons and revealed to Paul is that this vessel called the ecclesia, which is His body, saved by grace through faith in this present eon, is destined to be the vessel through which God heads up or sums up all in the heavens **and** on the earth. The body of Christ is not only spiritually seated among the celestials today but one day, very soon, will literally enter the celestials with the ability to move between the physical and spiritual realms “to set things right” and to head up all in Christ, for Christ and to the glory of God. Think about it!

The writer to the Hebrew believers revealed the same truth in reference to our current and future place in God’s kingdom in relation to the angels.

For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? **Thou madest him a little lower than the angels;** thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see **Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,** crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, **in bringing many sons unto glory,** to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (Hebrews 2.5-10 KJV)

Today, mankind is lower in rank in God’s kingdom than the angels. Jesus Himself humbled Himself and took on the form of a bond-servant and suffered death as one lower than the angels. Praise God; the Son is far above all today, crowned with glory and honor, awaiting the day that He will bring many sons unto glory.

Now, there is more to the secret of His will.

In accord with the purpose of the eons.

To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: **to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord;** in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith. Wherefore I am requesting you not to be despondent at those of my afflictions for your sake which are your glory. (Ephesians 3.8-13 cv)

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Paul's humility shines through his epistle like a bright beacon of hope. The less than the least of the saints was granted grace to bring forth the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ. He did nothing to merit such favor with God; it was all God's doing in taking the chief of sinners and lavishing His grace upon him, so that he could enlighten all with the glory of the secret of Christ.

The riches of Christ were hidden or concealed from the eons in God. Even the Hebrew prophets had not seen these riches. In many ways, we can now read the Old Testament and discover the many facets of Christ, which were concealed as a secret until Christ died, rose and ascended to His Father's throne. Foremost of the riches of Christ that were concealed from the eons pertain to Christ's celestial Headship and His body being part of His heading up all in the celestials. For all who believe in this eon, the most marvelous aspect of this secret is the celestial destiny of the body of Christ.

Paul declared that this destiny is in accord with the purpose of the eons. Notice that it is in accord with the purpose of the eons, and that it is not the full or complete purpose of the eons. This is an important point, for it is presented by some teachers that this is the complete purpose of the eons, as if the celestial destiny of the body of Christ is the purpose.

Let it be understood that the destiny of the body of Christ is a tremendous revelation and in no way do I desire to lessen it. This destiny is our hope and is to be our fondest desire. However, this does not alter the fact that Paul stated that it is *in* accord with the purpose of the eons. Why would Paul state it this way? The reason is very simple. Those counted worthy to attain to the resurrection of the next eon are the anointed firstfruits of the kingdom. They are the first to enter into the kingdom of God as sons to reign with Christ, but they are not the last, for it is God's purpose to bring all mankind into the glory of His kingdom, not all at the same time but all eventually with the consummation of the eons.

However, until that glorious day and in our present eon, God is calling out a special vessel that He has chosen to be the complement of His Son as His helpmate in completing the all in all. The wisdom of God in choosing a people to be part of the heading up of all things in heaven and on earth is so tremendous that God is making it known to the entire celestial realm. It is almost beyond our comprehension, but the angels and other celestial beings are being educated about the wisdom of God as He takes vessels, formed from the soil of the earth, and conforms them to the image of the Son of God. This is the multifarious wisdom of God.

Multifarious wisdom of God.

That now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, **the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons....**

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This is the signature verse of the book that you are reading. Paul is the one who has told us specifically that there is a purpose of the eons. In other words, the eons were made in the Son for a purpose. There are three points to be made in regard to this purpose.

First, who are these sovereignties and authorities among the celestials? We are not told who or what they are, but we can assume that they are created beings that administer the government of God among the celestials. They include the angels or messengers and, most likely, other beings that have not been revealed to us. These rulers among the celestials may include both the good and evil celestial beings (Ephesians 6.12-13).

Second, why is the multifarious wisdom of God being made known through the ecclesia, which is the body, to these rulers among the celestials? What does the body have to do with these celestial rulers? Well, in the next eon, it has everything to do with them, for the saints will judge them (1 Corinthians 6.3), that is, set things right with the angelic host, some of whom have battled against the saints. The body is destined to reign with Christ among the celestials.

The word *multifarious* means “to have many kinds of parts, a great diversity.” Some translations use the word *manifold*, which has the same meaning. God’s wisdom is multi-faceted, and it is through the ecclesia that God’s multi-faceted wisdom is revealed. Of course, Christ is the wisdom of God, and thus, His body, as His complement, is to express this multifarious wisdom to the rulers among the celestials. We are to express Christ!

In this day, we seem to be such a small expression of the wisdom of God in Christ. We are so frail and full of weaknesses that we seem to bring Christ down rather than lift Him up. But fear not, the grace of God has been lavished upon us, and there is far more wisdom being expressed through the body of Christ than we can see with our eyes. We are a spiritual body, and the rulers of the celestials are spirit beings. They see the wisdom of God in the ecclesia, even if we see little of it. In fact, in our weakness, the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials see the multifarious wisdom of God. In our weaknesses, the power of Christ is magnified. Grace!

This is so clearly expressed in the life of Paul.

Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, **“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.** Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with perse-

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cutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; **for when I am weak, then I am strong.** (2 Corinthians 12.7-10 NASB)

In Paul's life, we discover that grace and weakness kiss each other and produce the power of Christ. Let us not forget that Christ is also the wisdom of God. Undoubtedly, the rulers among the celestials looked at Paul and saw something that they could not explain apart from the wisdom of God. One day soon, this beloved apostle will be ushered into the celestial kingdom, along with all the conquerors of the body of Christ, to join Christ in heading up all in the celestials, which includes reigning among the celestials.

Third, when is this purpose to be revealed in its greatest measure? Paul actually gives the answer earlier in his epistle.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **so that in the ages [eons] to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.** (Ephesians 2.4-7 NASB [CV])

It is in the ages or eons to come that God intends to show the surpassing riches of His grace to us in Christ. In other words, I believe that when he penned this epistle, Paul was not looking back to the previous eons nor was he looking at the present wicked eon; he was looking forward to the oncoming eons, which are the eons of the eons, *the day of the Lord* and *the day of God*. He was not looking forward to what many call eternity, either. He was not writing about an eternal verity. He was writing about **an eonian verity**. Glory will be progressively manifested in the eons to come through the sons of God made alive in Christ.

Beloved in Christ, this is the multifarious wisdom of God that is in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord. The eons are made in Christ to bring forth God's purpose, in which we have been gloriously included. Praise God!

Christ among you.

Paul gives another encouragement in his epistle to the Colossians.

I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and am filling up in my flesh, in His stead, the deficiencies of the afflictions of Christ, **for His body, which is the ecclesia of which I became a dispenser, in accord with the administration of God, which is granted to me for you, to complete the word of God—the secret which has been concealed from the eons and from the generations, yet now was made manifest to His saints, to whom God wills to make known what are the glorious riches of this secret among the nations, which is: Christ among**

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you, the expectation of glory—Whom we are announcing, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we should be presenting every man mature in Christ Jesus; for which I am toiling also, struggling in accord with His operation, which is operating in me with power. (Colossians 1.24-29 cv)

Paul again refers to the secret, which has been concealed from the eons and from the generations, yet now manifested to His saints through the evangel. In the past, Christ walked among His brethren, the Israelites. His mission was to save them. During our day, Christ, in spirit, walks among the believers from among the nations. It is Christ among you, the nations, the expectation of glory.

The word of God was completed by Paul with this secret that Christ is among the nations. At one time, the nations were separated from the promises, having no expectation of glory, but now in Christ the glorious riches of the secret among the nations have been revealed. *Christ among you, the expectation of glory!*

It needs to be noted that some translations state *Christ in you*, meaning that Christ has taken up residence in His people. This certainly is true, for it is His life in us that will lead us to glory, the treasure in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4.7).

This is the secret revealed through Paul, the apostle of the nations, and the reason that he struggled and suffered. Paul desired that all mature or grow up in Christ Jesus, for the outcome is glory, the glory of Christ among the celestials.

Where do we see this glory manifested? We see it in the *city-bride* of the Lamb that comes down out of heaven having the glory of God. The new Jerusalem **is** the ecclesia, which is the body of Christ seated among the celestials (Revelation 21; 22.1-5).

Yet have no love.

Now, when he finished writing his thoughts on the wisdom of God and the purpose of the eons, it is as if Paul fell on his knees in worship of the Father.

On this behalf am I bowing my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named**, that He may be giving you, in accord with the riches of His glory, to be made staunch with power, through His spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, **having been rooted and grounded in love**, should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height—**to know the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God.** (Ephesians 3.14-19 cv)

Again, Paul brings us into the very heights of glory as he prayed on bowed knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He carried his thought to the entire universe

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of God and to every creature within God's creation in the heavens and on the earth. His heart's desire was that Christ will dwell in all our hearts through faith, and that we will be rooted and grounded in love.

We might have all the knowledge and know all the secrets, but if we have not love, we are nothing. This is what Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

And if I should have prophecy and should be perceiving all secrets and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so as to transport mountains, **yet have no love, I am nothing.** (1 Corinthians 13.2 cv)

Beloved in Christ, we have been given a most glorious celestial calling. The body of Christ is to be the complement of Christ, that is, the fullness of Christ, the expression or exact image of Him. But this is expressed in one way, and that is through love. Paul's heart for all the body of Christ, including us, is *to know the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God.*

How are we completed? In the love of Christ that transcends all! God is love and the entire complement or fullness of God is expressed as love. Oh, may Christ dwell richly in our hearts and fill us with His love, so that we are His expression of love on this earth as a testimony of what we will be in the coming eons among the celestials and on earth. Through the love of Christ, we most surely will be enjoyers of an allotment (inheritance) among the celestials, in accord with the purpose of the eons.

Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen! (Ephesians 3.20-21 cv)

Reconciliation of all.

There is one more matter in regard to the secret of the evangel; it does not stop with the ecclesia but extends to all mankind. This is a difficult matter for many of the Lord's people to accept in this day because the traditions of men have so forcefully denied and refuted this truth to the point that ones who teach this are told they are going to Christendom's modern-day version of *hell*. We must stand against such traditions. Our God is love, and in His love, He has willed that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Timothy 2.4 cv). Why must we argue that the word of God does not mean what it says in order to line up with the traditions of men? Let us allow the word of God to stand as it is and speak the truth to our hearts.

At the close of his epistle to the Romans, Paul prayed that they would be established in accord with his evangel, and the heralding of Christ Jesus in accord with

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the revelation of a secret hushed in times *eonian* (Romans 16.25-27 *cv*), which refers to the conciliation of the world (Romans 11.15, 32). However, in his Colossians epistle, Paul revealed this most profound truth that had been concealed from the eons or hushed in times *eonian*.

Through Him **to reconcile all to Him** (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens. (Colossians 1.20 *cv*)

Through the blood of the cross, God has reconciled all on the earth and in the heavens in Christ. *All* is an inclusive word that must encompass all on the earth and all in the heavens. In other words, the blood of His cross has made peace between God and all mankind, as well as all God's creatures in His vast universe. This is how comprehensive and inclusive the victory of the cross is. It extends to the full scope or dimensions of creation. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is left out. We do not really fathom the greatness of this peace, for we know so little of the ones who are in the celestial realm. But we do know that according to Paul, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them (2 Corinthians 5.19 *cv*). Today, all mankind is conciliated to God, even though all mankind has not conciliated to God; all mankind has not made peace with God, even though God has made peace with them. **Conciliation** is a one-sided peace agreement. Both parties must be at peace to have **reconciliation**.

Paul revealed to the Colossians that through Christ, God has reconciled all to Him, which means that Paul saw that a day will come when all God's creatures will be at peace with God. This is the absolute victory of the blood of the cross, and this victory will be manifested at the consummation of the eons when all in God's creation are subjected to the Son, and the last enemy, death, is abolished. All mankind will come to know the love of God and enter into the peace of God through the blood of His cross. Oh, the love of God!

In this present wicked eon, only the saints are reconciled to God (Colossians 1.22), but at the consummation when the last enemy, death, is abolished, all mankind will be at peace with God. However, we must not overlook the fact that this reconciliation transcends this earth and extends to all that are in the heavens as well: *Whether those on the earth or those in the heavens*.

Have you grasped the significance of this fact as revealed through Paul? This was a secret that was hidden in God and revealed to Paul. Christ has created all, He is in all, He has and yet will reconcile all, and He is Head and will be Head of all. All God's universe and creation will be summed up or headed up in Christ. This is the purpose of the eons and the secret of His will in Christ, and God has chosen a vessel called the body of Christ to be seated among the celestials and to be part of this glorious summing up on earth *and* in the heavens as the complement of the One completing the *All* in all.

Praise God!