

# **This is a Great Mystery**

## A Study of Ephesians

### Week 30 – Ephesians Wrap-up

**Prayer** – Dear Lord, as we reach the end of this letter, we thank you for all the truth, comfort, and mystery that you have included in it. Send us your Spirit so that we would grow in knowledge, in faith, and in the ability to live according to these words, to the glory of your most holy name. Amen.

**From Last Time** – I don't recall there being any questions that carried over from last week. Is there anything (worship-related or otherwise) that you would like to touch on before we finish Ephesians?

**Verses 21-22** - "Ἴνα δὲ εἰδῆτε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὰ κατ' ἐμέ, τί πράσσω, πάντα γνωρίσει ὑμῖν Τυχικός ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος ἐν κυρίῳ, <sup>22</sup> ὃν ἔπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, ἵνα γνῶτε τὰ περὶ ἡμῶν καὶ παρακαλέσῃ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν.

**So that you might also know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will reveal everything to you. <sup>22</sup> I am sending him to you for this reason, so that you might know how we are and he might encourage your hearts.**

1. Personal greetings/salutations are normal at the end of the New Testament letters. Romans 16 is the longest listing of names; Philippians 4 includes a greeting from those in Caesar's household, perhaps as an indication of how Paul's work in Rome had progressed; Colossians 4 features an extensive list; most of the greetings from Paul are somewhat generic. While these personal touches are interesting to read, they don't really affect doctrine much (although some ending chapters do include important warnings and encouragements). Still, what can we learn from such sections since they are the inspired words of God?
2. Who was Tychicus? Whenever he is mentioned (five times), he is a travel companion of Paul (Acts 20:4), but he also was an important "runner" for Paul (2 Timothy 4:12). Perhaps he carried Paul's letters from place to place or he was being trained to serve as an under-shepherd, similar to what Timothy and Titus were to be; perhaps both. It's obvious that Paul trusted him to relay things about him in an honest and loving way. Is there anything else you would like to discuss with regard to Tychicus?
  - a. On a somewhat similar note, it's amazing to me how communication happened back in those days with no post office (let alone the other tech we have).

**Verses 23-24** - Εἰρήνη τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς καὶ ἀγάπη μετὰ πίστεως ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. <sup>24</sup> ἡ χάρις μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἀγαπῶντων τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ.

**Peace to the brothers (and sisters) and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.**

3. There isn't necessarily a "normal" blessing across the New Testament. However, we see here the basic elements of a Christian blessing:
  - a. Peace, love, faith, and grace are all mentioned. Whenever you think of blessings, these things come to mind.
  - b. These things come from or are connected to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.
    - i. Not sure if this has been said or not, but there is a reason for the second person of the Trinity getting the three titles: "Lord" refers to his rule and power; "Jesus" refers to his humanity, which he still bears; "Christ" refers to his divine nature, specifically as the promised Anointed One.
  - c. The blessing is directed to those who are identified as saints or brothers and sisters in the faith.
  - d. Some examples from our worship services:
    - i. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
    - ii. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.
    - iii. The almighty and merciful Lord—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—bless us and keep us.
4. The last phrase is a little tricky, but the "incorruptibility" seems to describe the love of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ. So, a number of translations speak of an "undying" love. Describe how the love between us and Jesus is undying.

### **Final Thoughts and Comments**

Here's my basic outline for the sake of review (playing off the "mystery" theme as much as possible)

- Chapter 1 – The blessed mystery of being chosen by God
- Chapter 2 – Wondrous mystery! You were chosen by grace
  - 2a – Not by works
  - 2b – Not by nationality or lineage or race
- Chapter 3 – The mystery has been revealed
  - 3a – Through the Word and God's servants who share the Word
  - 3b – Paul prays that the mystery would fill our hearts
- Chapter 4 – Live a life that is worthy of the mystery!
  - 4a – As part of the body of Christ
  - 4b – Different than what unbelievers do
- Chapter 5 – Be imitators of God!
  - 5a – Live in the light and expose the darkness
  - 5b – The mystery of marriage
- Chapter 6 – Specific applications
  - 6a – Two very specific, but important, relationships
  - 6b – Be strong in the Lord

Did I answer all your thoughts and questions about the contents of the book of Ephesians through this study?

Did you learn anything new in this class?

Are you better equipped to share your faith using the contents of the book of Ephesians?

# Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

## The Great O Antiphons

The Great O Antiphons of Advent have been cherished for centuries by Christian worshipers. Each one consists of a title given to Christ in the Old Testament and a petition asking him to come and fulfill the scriptural promise or prophecy. We will be singing a number of these in the popular Advent hymn next week in worship; we will also use a Prayer of the Church that is based off these ancient titles.

### **O Emmanuel – Isaiah 7:10-14**

1. Discuss what significance the name “God with us” meant for a king who was fighting off two invading kings.
2. In what times or circumstances is God's presence most comforting to you?

Look up **Matthew 1:22,23**

3. Discuss at least three additional comforts God's personal presence among us in Jesus Christ brings.

**Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

## O WISDOM — Proverbs 8:1-3, 22-31

Do you hear Wisdom calling out? Do you hear Understanding raising her voice? <sup>2</sup> On the hills above the roads, she takes her stand at the crossroads. <sup>3</sup> Beside the gates leading into the city, at the entrance to the doorways, she cries out:

<sup>22</sup> “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his way, before his works of long ago. <sup>23</sup> From eternity I was appointed, from the beginning, from before the origin of the earth. <sup>24</sup> When there were no deep waters, I was brought forth, when there were no springs filled with water.

<sup>25</sup> Before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was brought forth, <sup>26</sup> when he had not yet made land or fields or the first dust of the world. <sup>27</sup> When he established the heavens, I was there. When he drew the horizon around the surface of the deep, <sup>28</sup> when he placed the clouds in the sky above, when the fountains of the deep gushed out, <sup>29</sup> when he established his decree for the sea, so that the waters could not go beyond the limit set by his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, <sup>30</sup> I was beside him as a master craftsman. I was his joy day after day. I rejoiced in his presence at all times. <sup>31</sup> I rejoiced in his inhabited world. I was delighted with the children of Adam.”

4. Underline the clues that point to Wisdom being Christ.

a. What event(s) does Wisdom harken back to?

5. Discuss what these verses teach us about the relationship between the Father and the Son.

6. **John 1:1-4** has a number of clear connections to Proverbs 8. What are they?

7. Go to **Colossians 2:2,3**. If it wasn't clear before, it is now—Christ Jesus is the embodiment of wisdom. What impact does that have on our faith and our life, especially when we are struggling?

8. Let's read **1 Corinthians 1:18-25**. Again, verse 24 identifies Christ as the Wisdom of God. Compare worldly wisdom with true Wisdom.

**Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high, who ordered all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**