

This Great Mystery

Ephesians and the Secret God Kept for Ages

Session 5. The Mystery Made Known

Reading: Ephesians 3:1-21

Part One

Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim

The group finds Paul's own partial definition of the mystery in 3:6, three 'together with' words, and then discovers in 3:10 that the Church is the instrument by which God's manifold wisdom is made known even to the heavenly powers.

Catholic Touchstone

The Church is not incidental to God's plan but written into it from eternity: through her, God's wisdom is displayed to angels, and in her, glory is given alongside Christ himself.

Chapter 3 is where Paul finally slows down and talks about the word your group has been circling since session 1. He starts a prayer in verse 1, interrupts himself for thirteen verses to explain his stewardship of the mystery, and then resumes the prayer on his knees. Tonight the group gets a real definition (3:6), a real puzzle (how can something promised for centuries be called hidden?), and the letter's most staggering claim about the Church so far (3:10). Your hardest job is thread discipline: the sealed guesses stay sealed. Paul defines the mystery tonight, but the letter has one more move to make with this word, and you must not let anyone smell chapter 5 coming.

What You Need to Know

The sentence Paul abandons

Verse 1 begins 'For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles' and then simply stops. Paul does not finish the thought until verse 14, where 'For this reason I bow my knees' picks the sentence back up. Everything between is a digression, but a deliberate one: before Paul can pray for the Ephesians, he needs them to understand what he was given and why he is in chains for it. Let the group notice the interruption; it is visible in any translation.

The vocabulary of 3:6

Paul's definition of the mystery uses three Greek words that all begin with *syn*, 'together with': the Gentiles are *synklēronoma* (co-heirs), *syssōma* (co-body-ed, members of the same body), and *symmetocha* (co-sharers of the promise). The middle word is not attested in Greek literature before this letter, so far as surviving evidence shows; Paul apparently had to coin it. That detail preaches itself: no existing word said what God had done, so the apostle made one. Present the coinage hedged ('apparently', 'so far as we can tell'), because arguments from surviving evidence are always provisional.

Hidden and promised at once

The night's central puzzle: Paul says the mystery was 'not made known to the sons of men in other generations' (3:5) and was 'hidden for ages in God' (3:9), yet the Old Testament promises blessing for the nations loudly and often. The resolution the group should find for themselves in the discovery moment: the fact of Gentile blessing was published for centuries; the form was sealed. No prophet said the nations would enter as co-heirs, one body, on equal footing inside Israel's Messiah, with no lower tier and no separate court. The mystery was hidden in plain sight.

Verse 10 and the powers

The letter's boldest ecclesiology so far: God's *polypoikilos sophia*, his many-colored, richly variegated wisdom, is made known to 'the principalities and powers in the heavenly places' through the Church. The vocabulary deliberately echoes 1:21 (Christ enthroned far above every principality and power) and sits in the same unseen realm as the hostile prince of 2:2. Whether Paul means holy angels, hostile powers, or the whole angelic order is exegetically open and the Church has not defined it; Fathers such as Chrysostom read it of the angels. Either way, the direction of the claim is fixed: spiritual intelligences learn something of God by watching the Church. Do not rush past this verse. It is the reason your parish matters more than it looks like it matters.

- Do not resolve the powers thread tonight; the armor of 6:10-18 is still coming.
- 1 Peter 1:12, 'things into which angels long to look', is the perfect cross-reference and lives in a Dig Deeper box.

The prayer and the doxology

When Paul resumes at 3:14 he kneels, which was not the ordinary posture; standing was the common Jewish posture for prayer (Mark 11:25 assumes it), so the kneeling signals intensity. The prayer's petitions climb: strength in the inner man by the Spirit, Christ dwelling in the heart through faith, rooting in love, power to comprehend the four dimensions 'with all the saints', knowledge of a love that outruns knowledge, and finally being 'filled with all the fullness of God', the same fullness language the letter gave the Church in 1:23. The doxology then does something almost scandalous: it locates glory 'in the church and in Christ Jesus', side by side, to all generations. That only makes sense if head and body are one living whole, which is exactly what session 2 planted.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

The promise published, the shape sealed

Genesis 12:1-3 promises that in Abraham the families of the earth will find blessing; Isaiah 49:5-6 makes the Servant a light to the nations so that salvation reaches the end of the earth. These are the discovery passages tonight. The fulfillment in Ephesians 3 is not merely that the promise came true but that it came true in a form no prophet had spelled out: co-inheritance, one body, one promise, in the Messiah. Note the quiet echo between Genesis 12:3's 'families of the earth' and Ephesians 3:15's 'every family in heaven and on earth'.

Daniel and the word itself

The Bible's vocabulary of 'mystery' enters through Daniel 2, where God is 'a revealer of mysteries' (2:28, 2:47) and the mystery concerns God's kingdom overtaking the empires of the world. The Greek versions of Daniel render the Aramaic *raz* with *mystērion*, the very word Paul uses. Paul, formed on Daniel, reaches for Daniel's word: a secret lodged with God, disclosed at God's chosen hour, concerning God's kingdom. This lives in a Dig Deeper box so it enriches without crowding the main discovery.

Voices of the Church

Read these aloud where they land. Each is either a direct citation or an honest summary, labelled as such.

St. John Chrysostom, d. 407

Preaching through this passage, Chrysostom lingers in astonishment over verse 10. The mystery, he teaches, was hidden not only from human beings but, in its full shape, even from the angels; the heavenly powers themselves learn the manifold wisdom of God by seeing what God has now done in the Church. What was kept from the eyes of heaven for ages is displayed among gathered, forgiven people.

Homilies on Ephesians, on 3:8-11. Summary of St. John Chrysostom's teaching, not a direct quotation.

For the group. When someone in the room wonders whether the visible Church really matters, here is a Father of the Church saying that angels receive instruction through it.

St. Thomas Aquinas, d. 1274

Aquinas asks the obvious objection: how can anything be 'made known' to angels, who behold God? His answer, in substance: the angels knew God's plan in its eternal source, but its concrete unfolding in time, Gentiles made co-heirs in one body with Israel, they see accomplished through the Church. And the wisdom is called 'manifold' not because God has many wisdoms but because his one simple wisdom expresses itself in many ways, across ages, peoples, and providences.

Commentary on Ephesians, chapter 3. Summary of St. Thomas Aquinas' teaching, not a direct quotation.

For the group. This gives your sharpest questioner a satisfying answer to 'why would angels need to learn anything?': knowing the plan in its source is not the same as watching it happen.

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, d. 1906

This young Carmelite took Paul's prayer in 3:16-19 with complete literalness: Christ really does dwell by faith in the baptized heart, so heaven does not wait for death to begin. She described her whole vocation as staying home with the God who dwells within, recollecting herself to find the Trinity already present in her soul, and she drew her very identity from this letter, loving Paul's phrase about living for the praise of God's glory.

Letters and retreat notes. Summary of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity's teaching, not a direct quotation.

For the group. Ephesians 3:14-21 is not rhetoric. A woman about the age of the people in your room built an entire life inside this prayer, and the Church canonized her.

Catechism Connection

The Catechism says

CCC 760. Echoing Christians of the first centuries, the Catechism says the world was created for the sake of the Church: God's purpose of communion, gathered in Christ, is older than everything, which is exactly the 'eternal

purpose' of 3:11.

CCC 1066. God's plan is the 'mystery of his will', revealed and accomplished in Christ; the Church exists to proclaim and celebrate this mystery, above all in the liturgy.

CCC 2214. The divine fatherhood is the source of human fatherhood, the ground of the honor owed to parents; this is the Catechism's landing point for 3:14-15.

CCC 2714. The Catechism describes contemplative prayer in the language of this very passage: the Father strengthens our inner being by the Spirit so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith and we may be rooted in love.

Thread Watch

Thread Watch

The mystery (develop). Tonight it gets a definition (3:6). Let the group feel the thrill of catching it, but do not confirm or deny any sealed guess and do not breathe a word about chapter 5. If someone says 'so that's the answer', say: it is an answer, and the letter has one more move to make with this word. The guesses stay sealed until session 9.

In Christ, in him, in the Beloved (develop). The three co-words of 3:6 only work 'in Christ Jesus'; note also 3:11 and 3:12 ('in whom'). Co-inheritance has an address.

Head and body (develop). *syssōma* presses the body language of 1:23, and the doxology's 'glory in the church and in Christ Jesus' is head-and-body logic at full volume. Connect back to session 2 without re-teaching it.

Inheritance and possession (develop). 'Fellow heirs' picks up the inheritance vocabulary of 1:11-14 and 1:18. The Gentiles are not guests at the reading of the will; they are written into it.

The powers (develop). Big night for this thread: 1:21 seated Christ above the powers, 2:2 named a hostile prince among them, and 3:10 now makes the Church the instrument of their instruction. Develop, do not resolve; the armor of 6:10-18 is still coming.

Objection Bench

Leader only. Do not raise these unless someone in the room does.

Why would angels need to learn anything? Aren't they already in heaven, seeing God?

Angels are creatures; only God knows all things by nature. A created intellect can know God's plan in its source and still marvel at watching it unfold in time, the way you can know a composer and still be astonished at the premiere. Scripture itself says there are 'things into which angels long to look' (1 Peter 1:12).

Doesn't 3:6 mean the sealed guesses are basically answered, so we should just open them tonight?

No. Say plainly that Paul has given a definition, and that the letter is not finished with the word. Opening the guesses now would spend in session 5 what session 9 is built to pay. Keep them sealed and let the anticipation work.

If the mystery was hidden 'for ages', doesn't that make the Old Testament a failed or misleading revelation?

The opposite: the discovery moment shows the promise was truly published for centuries. God was not silent; he was staging a disclosure. Progressive revelation means earlier stages are real and true, and the last stage

exceeds them.

Session Goals

1. Trace Paul's own partial definition of the mystery in 3:6 and hear the three 'together with' words for what they claim.
2. Discover from the prophets themselves in what sense the mystery was simultaneously promised and hidden.
3. Land verse 10: the Church is the instrument by which God's many-colored wisdom reaches even the heavenly powers.
4. Face the strongest possible reading of 3:3-4 as an argument for Scripture alone, and answer it from the passage itself.
5. Pray, not merely study, Paul's prayer of 3:14-21, and send everyone home praying it over someone by name.

Time Note

Planned for 75 to 90 minutes

Ninety minutes: opening prayer and Win about 12, reading 6, questions 1 to 5 about 32, the steelman and question 7 about 20, questions 8 to 10 about 12, Send, Live It This Week, and closing about 8. Inviting the room to kneel at verse 14 costs nothing and buys a great deal.

If you are running long, cut in this order.

1. Fold question 5 into question 3: carry 'hidden for ages in God who created all things' into the definition discussion and skip the rest of question 5.
2. Drop both Dig Deeper boxes.
3. Compress question 8 to a single observation: every fatherhood is named from the Father, not the other way around.
4. Ask only the first Win question.

Part Two

Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Pray together

Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, we bow before you tonight. Strengthen us with might through your Spirit in our inner selves. Let Christ dwell in our hearts through faith, and root us in love, so that with all the saints we can begin to grasp how wide and long and high and deep his love is. What you kept hidden for ages you have chosen to make known; open this passage to us, and give us eyes to see what you have shown. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Win

Open questions. No wrong answers. Let everyone speak before you move on.

W1. Tell us about a time someone kept a good secret from you: a surprise party, a gift, an announcement. What was it like when it finally came out?

W2. Has a hard stretch of your life ever made more sense looking back than it did while you were in it?

The secrets theme is quietly setting up verse 5; do not explain that, just enjoy the stories.

Read

Read aloud

Three readers: verses 1 to 7, verses 8 to 13, verses 14 to 21. Ask the third reader to slow down noticeably at verse 14; it is a prayer and should sound like one. If your space allows, invite the whole group to kneel with the reader from verse 14 to the end.

Build

Numbered inductive questions. Ask, wait, let the group work the text. The ANSWER boxes are for you to share after the discussion, not before it.

A prisoner rereads his chains

1. Look at verse 1 and then jump ahead to verse 13. How does Paul describe his imprisonment, and whose prisoner does he say he is? What does verse 13 call his sufferings?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Rome holds the keys, but Paul never calls himself Rome's prisoner. He is 'a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles'. He has reread his chains from inside God's plan: he is locked up precisely because he preached the Gentile inclusion this chapter describes, so even his imprisonment serves the people he writes to. That is why verse 13 can say the astonishing thing it says: he asks them not to lose heart over his sufferings, 'which is your glory'. The same event, read two ways: Rome sees a prisoner; Paul sees a stewardship being paid for.

2. In verses 2 to 5, what does Paul say was given to him, and what does he call it? And when the mystery was finally revealed, who exactly received the revelation, and how?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

He was given 'the stewardship of God's grace', and notice the next words: given to me 'for you'. The Greek word is *oikonomia*, household management: grace received in trust, to be handed on, not a private possession. And the revelation was made known 'to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit' (verse 5). Those are the same two offices we found under the building in 2:20, the foundation of the household. Revelation in this letter does not land on a lone genius having a private experience; it lands in an office, held by a body, for the sake of everyone else.

The mystery gets a definition

3. Verse 6 is the sentence this whole study has been waiting for: 'that is, how the Gentiles are...'. What three things does Paul say the Gentiles are? Make the list together, and weigh each word.

Take it as far as the room wants

Floor. Just make the list: what three things are the Gentiles said to be?

Ground. What is the difference between 'Gentiles can be saved too' and 'fellow heirs, same body, same promise'?

Depth. Why might Paul have needed to invent a word here? What does it say about an event when language has no word for it yet?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. In Greek all three begin with *syn*, 'together with': *synklēronoma*, *syssōma*, *symmetocha*. The middle one appears nowhere in surviving Greek literature before this letter; Paul apparently had to invent a word, something like 'co-body-ed', because no existing word said what God had done. And notice what the mystery is not: it is not 'Gentiles can be saved too', which any prophet could have told you. It is total co-inclusion: the same inheritance, the same body, the same promise, with no lower tier and no separate court, and all of it 'in Christ Jesus'. This is a definition, and the group has genuinely caught something tonight. Keep the guesses sealed anyway: the letter has one more move to make with this word.

Live discovery

Split the room in half. One half turns to Genesis 12:1-3, the other to Isaiah 49:5-6. Each group reads its passage aloud and answers one question: what does God promise here about the nations, and roughly how many centuries before Paul was it said? Then bring both back to the table and face the puzzle head on: if this was announced out loud for that long, in what sense was the mystery hidden for ages?

Let them find it. Genesis 12:1-3; Isaiah 49:5-6

4. Paul says this mystery was 'not made known to the sons of men in other generations' (verse 5) and was 'hidden for ages in God' (verse 9). But is that true? Didn't the Old Testament talk about the nations constantly? Let's go check.

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Both passages announce the fact centuries ahead of time: through Abraham, blessing reaches the families of the earth; the Servant is made a light to the nations so salvation runs to the end of the earth. So what was hidden? Not that the Gentiles would be blessed. What was hidden was the form and the extent: that they would enter as co-heirs, one body, on completely equal footing inside Israel's Messiah. No prophet spelled that out. The mystery was hidden in plain sight: the promise was published; the shape was sealed. That is why Paul can say it was hidden 'in God' without contradicting his own Bible, and notice the small echo: Genesis promises blessing to the families of the earth, and in verse 15 Paul will name the Father from whom every family is named.

Dig Deeper

Where does the Bible's word 'mystery' even come from? Look at Daniel 2:27-28 and 2:47: God is 'a revealer of mysteries', and the mystery concerns God's kingdom overtaking the world's empires. The Greek versions of Daniel use *mystērion*, Paul's exact word, for the Aramaic *raz*. Paul, raised on Daniel, is reaching for Daniel's category: a secret lodged with God, disclosed at God's hour, concerning God's kingdom.

Unsearchable riches

5. In verses 7 to 9, how does Paul describe himself, how does he describe his message, and where does he say the plan was hidden all this time?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

He calls himself 'the very least of all the saints', and this from the man handed the largest missionary assignment in history. Grace and honesty about one's past can live in the same sentence; the size of the gift never stops astonishing him. His message is 'the unsearchable riches of Christ': riches you can spend forever exploring without hitting bottom. And the plan was hidden 'for ages in God who created all things'. That last phrase matters: the mystery is not plan B, improvised after Israel's story stalled. It is older than Israel, older than everything, lodged in the Creator from before the start.

6. Verses 3 and 4 say that when you read what Paul wrote, you can perceive his insight into the mystery. Some of our friends would say that verse settles a very big question. Let's give their argument its full weight before we answer it.

Build then press

The strongest form of the objection. Paul says it himself: 'when you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ.' There it is in the text. The apostles received the revelation once for all (verse 5), they wrote it down, and whoever reads what they wrote now perceives what they perceived. If reading Paul gives you Paul's insight, then Scripture is sufficient. The mystery needs no ongoing magisterium, no priesthood, no Rome to unlock it; Paul expects ordinary readers, reading an ordinary letter, to understand him. The Catholic appeal to an interpreting Church adds a layer Paul never mentions here, and history suggests that layer has mostly gotten between believers and the plain apostolic word.

Answering from the text. Take verse 4 with complete seriousness; the Church does. Everything the objection says about the power of the written word is true, which is why the Church reads Paul aloud at Mass more often than most of us show up to hear him. But look at where this letter locates itself. The revelation was given not to Paul alone but 'to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit' (verse 5), the same two offices that are the foundation of the household in 2:20. Paul calls his ministry a 'stewardship of God's grace' given to him 'for you'

(verse 2): grace received in office, to be handed on. And when this very passage names the instrument by which God's wisdom goes public, it does not say 'through the epistle'; it says 'through the church' (verse 10). The letter is not a rival to the Church; it is one act of the Church's apostolic stewardship: written to a church, carried by a church, read in the assembly, copied and kept and eventually recognized as Scripture by the same apostolic body. So verse 4 proves that the written word truly communicates, and Catholics affirm that without reservation. What it does not say is that the word floats free of the household that wrote it, guarded it, and canonized it. Ephesians never imagines the two apart, and neither should we.

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Verse 4 is a real argument and deserves respect: the written apostolic word genuinely communicates apostolic insight, and the Church has always said so. But the same passage puts that word inside a larger structure: revelation given to apostles and prophets as a body (verse 5), held as a stewardship to be handed on (verse 2), and made public 'through the church' (verse 10). Scripture and Church are not competitors in this chapter; the letter itself lives inside the Church's stewardship. Both, together, or neither: that is the shape of the text.

7. Read verse 10 slowly, twice. According to this verse, who is the audience of God's wisdom, and what is the instrument by which they come to know it? Then read verses 11 to 13: how long has this purpose existed, and what does it give us?

Take it as far as the room wants

Floor. Who finds out about God's wisdom in verse 10, and through what?

Ground. What does it do to your picture of an ordinary Sunday Mass that this verse says angels learn from the Church?

Depth. God could have instructed the angels directly. Why might he choose to teach them through a body made of forgiven sinners?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

The audience is 'the principalities and powers in the heavenly places': the same vocabulary as 1:21, where Christ was seated far above them, and the same unseen realm where 2:2 located a hostile prince. Whether Paul means holy angels, hostile powers, or the whole angelic order is a question the Church has left open; Fathers like Chrysostom read it of the angels. Either way the direction is fixed: spiritual intelligences learn about God by watching something. And the instrument is 'through the church'. Not around the Church, not in spite of her: through her, God publishes his *polypoikilos sophia*, wisdom that is many-colored, richly variegated. This concrete body of forgiven Jews and Gentiles is God's display of wisdom to heaven itself. Verse 11 says this was 'the eternal purpose which he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord', verse 12 says it gives us boldness and confident access, and verse 13 draws the conclusion: therefore do not lose heart over Paul's chains. If God's eternal purpose runs through the Church, an apostle's imprisonment is not evidence the plan is failing.

Dig Deeper

1 Peter 1:12 says the good news preached to us contains 'things into which angels long to look'. Two different apostles, the same startling idea: heaven watches what happens among us, and wants to.

On his knees

8. At verse 14 Paul finally finishes the sentence he started in verse 1. What posture does he take, and what does he say about the Father in verse 15? Which direction does the naming run?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

He bows his knees. Standing was the ordinary Jewish posture for prayer (Mark 11:25 assumes people 'stand praying'), so kneeling here signals unusual intensity; Paul is not dashing off a blessing, he is pleading. And he prays to the Father 'from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named'. In Greek the wordplay is audible: *patria*, family, comes from *patēr*, father. Every fatherhood is named from the Father. The naming runs downward: fatherhood is not projected up from human dads onto God; it descends from God to us. That matters pastorally: whatever anyone's experience of a human father, good or wounding, the original is God, and every copy is measured by the original, never the other way around.

9. Walk through verses 16 to 19 and list what Paul actually asks for. What are the petitions, and where does the prayer end up?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

The petitions climb like a staircase: to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to be rooted and grounded in love; to have power to comprehend 'with all the saints', notice that comprehension here is communal, you cannot measure this alone, 'what is the breadth and length and height and depth'; to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge; and finally to be 'filled with all the fullness of God'. That is the same fullness language the letter used of the Church in 1:23. And notice the shape of the whole prayer: the Father (verse 14), the Spirit (verse 16), the Son (verse 17). The Trinity pattern we traced in the opening blessing of chapter 1 is back, no longer as theology to admire but as a prayer to pray over actual people.

10. Read the doxology in verses 20 and 21. Where, exactly, does Paul say glory is given? What is surprising about that, and for how long does it run?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Glory is given 'in the church and in Christ Jesus'. Paul sets the Church inside the doxology, side by side with Christ. That is either scandalous or it is exactly what head-and-body has been telling us since 1:23: the two are one living whole, so the glory that fills the head shines in the body. And it runs 'to all generations, for ever and ever'. The Church is not scaffolding to be taken down once the real building is finished; she is in the plan to the end. A fitting last word for a chapter that began with a man in chains: the God at work within us 'is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think'.

Send

Open questions. Let these land in silence if they need to.

S1. Paul, sitting in chains, calls his suffering the Ephesians' glory. Is there anything in your life right now that this way of seeing could touch?

S2. If the angels really do learn God's wisdom by watching the Church, what do you hope they see when they watch us this week?

Live It This Week

Practices

1. Pray Ephesians 3:14-21 out loud once a day this week, putting one specific person's name where Paul says 'you'. Kneel if you are able; Paul did.
2. Once this week, when something costs you real time, comfort, or patience, offer it silently 'on behalf of' someone, the way Paul offered his chains.
3. Before Mass this Sunday, remember verse 10: you are walking into the thing through which God instructs the heavenly powers. Arrive five minutes early and tell him you know it.

Scripture Memory

Ephesians 3:20-21

"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen."

Ephesians 3:20-21

Closing Prayer

Pray together

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think: Father, we did not know how much you had planned before the world began. Thank you for making us fellow heirs, members of one body, sharers in the promise. Strengthen our inner selves this week, let Christ dwell in our hearts through faith, and make our parishes, our friendships, and our ordinary days a lesson in your wisdom for every watching power. To you be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

Part Three

Leader Reference Card

Every passage used in this session, in order. Print this page and keep it in front of you.

Primary text

- **Ephesians 3:1-21**

Within Ephesians (callbacks)

- **Ephesians 1:9-10** the mystery first named
- **Ephesians 1:21** Christ above the principalities and powers
- **Ephesians 1:23** the Church as fullness
- **Ephesians 2:2** the hostile prince of the power of the air
- **Ephesians 2:20** apostles and prophets as foundation

Discovery passages

- **Genesis 12:1-3** blessing promised to the families of the earth
- **Isaiah 49:5-6** a light to the nations

Dig Deeper

- **Daniel 2:27-28** God the revealer of mysteries
- **Daniel 2:47** a revealer of mysteries
- **1 Peter 1:12** things into which angels long to look
- **Mark 11:25** standing as ordinary prayer posture

Terms

- ***mystērion***. a secret lodged with God, disclosed at his chosen hour
- ***oikonomia***. stewardship, household management of the plan
- ***synklēronoma***. co-heirs
- ***syssōma***. co-body-ed, members of the same body; apparently coined by Paul
- ***symmetocha***. co-sharers of the promise
- ***polypoikilos***. many-colored, richly variegated (wisdom)
- ***patria***. family, fatherhood; named from *patēr*, father

Catechism

- CCC 760. the world created for the sake of the Church
- CCC 1066. the mystery of God's will, proclaimed and celebrated
- CCC 2214. divine fatherhood, source of human fatherhood
- CCC 2714. contemplative prayer in the words of Eph 3:16-17