***“The Great Mystery”***

**Ephesians 3:1-13**

**Intro:** The Apostle Paul was a man who had a deep burning love for the Church of Jesus Christ.

Paul was a vessel, a man chosen by God to reveal the mystery of the Church. *It’s a mystery in the sense that it is something that up until this point had never been revealed before*. It is also a mystery in the sense that *the Body of Christ*, the Church that he is talking about here in **chapter 3** is unique. It is different than anything else.

* It's a whole new concept. “*The Body of Christ*”. Said a little more distinctly – *The Church is Christ's Body in the world*. Say that this way**:** This Body, the Church is to be the expression of Christ in the world.
* The real mystery is this**:** (**vs 6)** That *all* believers; Jew and Gentile, slave and free, man and woman, Greek and barbarian *are one flesh*.

What we find, or gain in **chapter 3**, is a sense of how Paul loved the Church, *and how he wanted the people who were in the Church to understand their relationship with other believers within the Body*.

What God designed to happen between you and me in the Body, was a fusion, a merging together. You and I would become one, that is the Body, that is the Body of Christ. **You + Me = One**. As a true follower of Christ, I cannot live my life separate from you. There are different parts, there are different functions, *but there is one flesh*, and that is the mystery. That is the mystery of the Church, and that is what Paul is revealing right here.

The implication is simply this**:** *If in the Body of Christ there is discord, bitterness, and strife, or simply being detached relationally – at that point of detachment, discord, bitterness or strife, at that point the Body is disconnected, it is separated and it is maimed*.

* That is why dear believers, all through the New Testament we have exhortations to the Church (example – Col. 3).

We need to understand – The Church is vitally important to Christ.

* *The Church is His, He bought it with His own blood, and then He built it by Himself, on Himself, for Himself*.

**Application:**