

Sunday, December 15, 2024

The Unsearchable Riches Of Christ

This is the sixth in a series of sermons through the book of Ephesians, and today we will be entering into chapter 3. Chapter 2, you'll recall, has God taking us from the depths of spiritual death, hopelessness and Christlessness to the heights of being seated with Him in heavenly places and being fitly framed together to form the very habitation of God. All of this is done in and through Christ. Peter says a similar thing in 1 Peter 2:

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

Don't lose sight that the focus in chapter 2 is on God's power, love, mercy and grace towards His church. It is for our peace and comfort. The point is to show us what we were and what we deserved outside of Christ, and what we have become as a new creation in Christ. It's easy to forget these things. Not only do we have a sinful inclination to be spiritual amnesiacs, but Satan desires to take these comforts away from us. This is a particular point of attack for him. His accusations, slanders, contentions, afflictions, persecutions, etc., are all designed to get us to look away from Christ. And to whatever degree we take his bait (and we all do), it is to that extent that we don't experience the love and nearness and peace of God. I believe that this is at least one of the reasons why, after all the glorious words in chapter 2, Paul launches into a prayer that we might "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge" (Ephesians 3:19). But just as he gets started with the prayer, he digresses to talk about his ministry. He'll pick the prayer back up in verse 14, and Lord willing, we'll get to that next time. Today's sermon, though, is about this little digression. You can think of verses 2-13 as being in parentheses.

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles

the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. (Ephesians 3:1-13)

The passage is broken up into two parts. Verses 1-7 are primarily about the dispensation of the grace of God given to Paul. Verses 8-13 are primarily about how Paul carries out the task given to him by God.

The Dispensation Of The Grace Of God

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. (Ephesians 3:1-7)

Paul identifies himself as “the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.” When Paul wrote this epistle, he was a prisoner. It’s very likely that he was in Rome, chained to a Roman soldier 24 hours a day, living in a house for which he was required to pay rent (see Acts 28:16,20,30). But he doesn’t call himself a prisoner of Rome or a prisoner of Nero. He calls himself the prisoner of Jesus Christ. He was imprisoned because of the faithful work that he had done for Christ in preaching to the Gentiles. It’s his mention of this affliction that launches him off into this digression about his ministry, and he’ll close the loop in verse 13 when he refers to his “tribulations,” so I’ll talk a little bit more about that later. Digression is a very human thing to do, and in his epistles, Paul goes off on a tangent more than once. We can certainly learn from this that although the Holy Spirit inspired the scripture, He did it through some 40 humans who retained their individual personalities, mannerisms and ways of speaking.

He says “if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward.” The “if” doesn’t imply doubt. Remember, he had personally spent around 3 years in Ephesus preaching to them. He’s writing this letter within 5 years or so of that time. Many of them certainly knew Paul personally, and without any doubt, all of them had at least heard of

his ministry. It might be better translated “since” or “seeing that.” Grammatically, this is part of a large conditional statement that starts in verse 2 and ends in verse 13. Verse 2 is the “if” part and verse 13 is the “then” part. The message is “if you have heard this...then don’t faint at my tribulations.” One of the main reasons for this digression is that he is concerned for them, that they will lose heart and faint because of his tribulations. More on that later.

What is a dispensation? Here, it means a stewardship, guardianship, custodianship, special responsibility, administration, commission. The metaphor is to the master of the household giving a steward a job to do. Remember the “household” language at the end of chapter 2; he is continuing with that theme here. God is the Master of the household, and He has “given” this dispensation to Paul. It was a divine gift. Paul didn’t make it up. He wasn’t an inventor; he was a steward. A steward is supposed to faithfully manage someone else’s property (see 1 Cor. 4:1-2). This thing given to Paul is called the “dispensation of the grace of God.” It is a dispensation that came by grace to a man who had been a fierce foe. And it is a dispensation that is about grace. Paul acted as an administrator of the grace of God. He took it and dispensed it, as it were, as God told him to. He didn’t modify it. He didn’t try to “improve” it. He didn’t add to it. He didn’t leave things out. And he says it was “to you-ward.” That is, the Gentiles. He was “the apostle of the Gentiles.” (Rom. 11:13). He tells us at the end of the passage that he was made a “minister” (i.e., servant) of the gospel. He didn’t arrogate that position to himself; it was a gift of grace, and he was enabled and equipped to do what he needed to do “by the effectual working of his power.” All the glory, therefore, belongs to God.

This dispensation involves a mystery. Now, when we use the word “mystery” we frequently mean something that we can’t understand, that is obscure, vague, puzzling, nebulous. That’s not what the word means here. Here, it is something that “in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men.” That is, it is something that was once intentionally hidden. It’s something that we couldn’t possibly know without the Holy Spirit revealing it. That’s why Paul says that it was made known to him “by revelation” and something that “is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” The nature of this mystery is that it is something that could never have been searched out and discovered – it had to be revealed. This is partly what it means for the church to be “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (Ephesians 2:20) – they had this mystery revealed to them as foundational truth.

But what is this mystery? Well, he gives us a clue in the little parenthetical note – “as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.” He’s referring to what he had just written in the first two chapters, particularly what he wrote at the end of chapter two. He calls it the “mystery of Christ.” It is a mystery that comes from Christ, and it is a mystery about Christ. We could say that the mystery consists of Christ Himself. It’s the mystery of Christ dwelling in us, both Jew and Gentile, and

uniting us together as one body. He describes it in Colossians 1:27 like this: “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**” Paul is not being arrogant when he says, “when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.” He’s not saying “I want you to look at what I wrote and understand how smart I am.” On the contrary, he’s attributing all his knowledge to the revelation and grace of God, and he apparently thinks that what he’s been talking about in this epistle is of such importance that he wants to make sure it is regularly read and studied. He doesn’t want to leave them with any uncertainty about whether or not he knows what he’s talking about. He is laboring to pass this knowledge along to them, while fully understanding that this can’t be done apart from the Holy Ghost (see Eph. 1:17). To “read” it, incidentally, refers to reading it aloud when the church would meet.

He defines the specific content of the mystery in verse 6. It’s a very important and foundational verse. “That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.” This is something that had never been revealed before – this is something “which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed.” Of course, we all should know that prophecies abound in the OT about Gentiles being saved, being blessed, and worshipping God. There had never been any mystery about that. Paul gives a small sampling of these verses in Romans 15:

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.
(Rom. 15:8-12)

And it had never been a mystery that Gentiles did, in fact, come to worship God in the OT. Think Ruth. Think Rahab. And I can’t think of a more impressive example than the Ninevites:

Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them...And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not. But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry... Then said the LORD...should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle? (Jonah 3:4-5, 10; 4:1,10-11)

The mystery is not simply that Gentiles would believe and be blessed and saved. The mystery is that Jews and Gentiles are fellow heirs; that Jews and Gentiles are fellow members of the same body; that Jews and Gentiles are fellow partakers of his promise. (Notice the threefold stress on the idea of “togetherness” – heirs, members, partakers.) And all of this occurs in Christ – there is no inheritance, body, or partaking in any promise outside of Christ. And the means by which this all occurs is through the ministration of the gospel. That is the mystery. In the church, we are all one in Christ. There is not a Jewish inheritance and a Gentile inheritance – there is one inheritance of which we are fellow heirs and “joint-heirs with Christ” who has been “appointed heir of all things.” (Rom. 8:17, Heb. 1:2). That is, Christ is the heir of all things, and we (whether Jew or Gentile) are joint heirs with Him, and joint heirs with one another. There is not a Jewish body and a Gentile body – there is one body, and it is the body of Christ. There is not a Jewish bride and a Gentile bride – there is one bride, and it is the bride of Christ, for whom He gave Himself. There is not a Jewish household and a Gentile household – there is one household of God. There is not a Jewish temple and a Gentile temple – there is one holy temple in the Lord. There is not a Jewish promise and a Gentile promise – there is one promise in Christ of which all in the church are fellow partakers.

What is the promise (singular)? It may be the Holy Spirit, called “the Holy Spirit of promise” in 1:13. Or it may be referring to “the covenants of promise” which all terminate in Christ, from which the Gentiles had previously been strangers (2:12). Whatever the case, it certainly extends to all the promises that go along with having the Holy Spirit and being in Christ, “for all the promises of God in him [Christ] are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God.” (2 Cor. 1:20). Some of these promises referenced in the New Testament are: the resurrection, the gospel of God, God dwelling in us, God walking in us, God being our God, us being God’s people, God being a Father to us, us being God’s sons and daughters, eternal life, eternal inheritance, the new covenant, the crown of life, the kingdom of God, the new heavens and new earth, and the return of Christ. Many of these promises are originally found in the Old Testament and in that context were often confined to the Jews but they now belong to us also, in Christ. To be clear, I’m not saying that these promises are primarily for the Jews, but we can also make some secondary application to ourselves – I’m saying that in Christ, those selfsame promises belong to us and we are equal partakers. As a child of God who is in Christ, those promises are your personal promises. When God made those promises, He had you, personally, in mind. I’d recommend a study of the book of Hebrews, which is full of “promise” language. Galatians 3 also sheds a lot of light on this. The promises were made to Abraham and his seed. That seed is the Lord Jesus Christ. Through faith in Him, we are baptized into Christ, we have put on Christ, and we are all one in Christ. Therefore, it is by being in union with Him, the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16), that we are “Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29). That is how we Gentiles become partakers of those promises – by being joined to Christ, the seed of Abraham. In Christ, those promises are yours and mine.

Now, some of you may be thinking, “this stuff about Jew and Gentile is all very interesting, but so what? How does this affect me? The church is made up primarily of Gentiles. This Jewish/Gentile dynamic is old news. What’s the big deal?” First, you’re not going to understand the Bible unless you understand this; the New Testament is saturated with it. Second, it’s just as relevant today as it was 2,000 years ago. Consider that if this mystery “that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel” was not a present reality, this church would not exist. You wouldn’t have “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” (1 Pet. 1:4). You wouldn’t be part of the body of Christ. You wouldn’t be a partaker in His promise. He’s answering the fundamental question of how it ever came to pass that you previously hopeless, lost, Christless people ever came to be saved. If you neglect this teaching, you will find yourself knee-deep in confusion, strange doctrines and grievous errors. Consider also that although the church is primarily made up of Gentiles today, another part of the mystery of Christ is this: “I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved...” (Romans 11:25-26).

To Preach And To Make All Men See

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. (Ephesians 3:8-13)

Having gone over what the mystery is and the dispensation that had been graciously and powerfully given to Paul, we’re now going to look at how Paul was to carry out his ministry. And it all starts with humility. He calls himself “less than the least of all saints.” He considers himself to be lower than every other saint, no doubt because of his previous persecution of the church. Now, it is a general rule of thumb that if somebody is telling you how humble they are, they aren’t humble. When people talk about how low or worthless they are, it’s usually either a thin veneer that sits on top of an exceedingly arrogant and selfish human where they are perversely proud of their “humility,” and/or it’s a manipulation tactic where you’re fishing for a compliment, or trying to get someone to do something for you, or trying to shut a person down, etc. We’ve all put on false shows of humility. But that’s not what’s happening here. Paul is a humble man, and we know that because the focus is not on him but on God - it’s

through his humility that he's elevating and glorifying Christ. This isn't a "woe is me, look at how vile I am." This is a "look at how gracious God is – He took an evil person like me and saved me." The closer you get to the John the Baptist approach of "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30), the closer you are to real, sincere humility.

To this man who had been the chief of all sinners and a great enemy of the church and of the gospel of grace, God gave the gracious gift of being one of the church's chief heralds. He gave him two jobs. The first is to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." To "preach" here is the verb form of the word "gospel." It's where we get the English word "evangelize." It means that he was to preach the good news of the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles. Christ sums up what we're supposed to preach like this: "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Lk. 24:47). That's the command. He told us to preach these things "in His name." That is, by His authority, as the one who gives repentance and remissions of sins, "neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). And this is exactly what Paul preached in Ephesus – "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21). It is under that overarching message that he said, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:27). In other words, he wasn't just stating disembodied facts about the counsel of God – he was doing it in the context of carrying out the commission that had been given to him. If what he was preaching didn't revolve around and point to Christ, both in word and in motivation, he wouldn't have been a faithful steward in preaching the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

"Unsearchable" is an interesting word. It means "untraceable" or "not tracked out." It's a reference to when a person goes hunting and looks for tracks to follow. It means we can't find it on our own – we need revelation. It means that we can't comprehend it all. We can't follow it. It's too deep. There's too much. It's too amazing. It's too glorious. We can't understand how valuable and precious He actually is. I feel like I learn more about Him every day, and I love Him more than I did the day before, but I don't know Him fully. We'll never get to the bottom of His riches, even in eternity. But that doesn't mean that we can't know some of those riches now in part. I mean, we know that He came to save sinners. We know He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. We know that He didn't come to destroy men's lives but to save them. We know that He came to give life to as many as the Father had given Him. We know He's going to judge the world in righteousness. We know He's going to cast false professors into hell. We know that as many as He's called, He is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Today's passage itself contains many riches of Christ – He made the believing Gentiles fellow-heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise. Justification, peace, rest, joy, hope, contentment,

consolation, glorification, life. His treasure house is full of these types of riches and more that are available to us. But if you are still a natural man, a worldly man, a man dead in trespasses and sins, a man who does not believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God, you have neither part nor lot in the riches of Christ. And if you don't have the riches of Christ, you don't have anything. What do you put your hope and trust in? How is your time spent? What gives you joy? What's important to you? Health? Family? Friends? Job? School? House? Entertainment? Food? Money? Sports? I tell you that those things will be stripped away from you in an instant, and if you don't have the riches of Christ, you will be left destitute.

So, the first job given to Paul was to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles. The second job was "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery." To "make to see" here means to shine a light on or illuminate. It implies that the default state of this doomed world is gross darkness and a lack of understanding. A light needs to be shined. The specific light here is "the fellowship of the mystery." Interestingly, "fellowship" is the exact same Greek word as was translated "dispensation" a few verses above. There, it focused on Paul's role as steward in the execution of the plan. Here, it refers to the plan or the administration itself – God's carrying out of the mystery. He has a plan for this world, and it was Paul's job to make all men see that. We encountered this back in chapter 1:

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him. (Ephesians 1:9-10)

He has a plan. It involves restoring a fallen creation and gathering together in one all things in Christ. It involves redeeming a people - calling out a people for Himself. We've been learning today about that part of the mystery where He's arranged things in Christ to call out Gentiles as part of that people. This mystery had been hidden in God from the beginning of the world, but it is revealed now. It was always part of the plan, from the beginning of the world. Before God created Adam and Eve, before any human had ever fallen, this plan was in place. It was baked into creation. The same God that created all things by Jesus Christ has joined elect Jews and Gentiles together into one new man – a new creation. It's His world. It's His plan. It's His prerogative.

So, Paul is supposed to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles and to enlighten all men about the administration of this mystery that we've been talking about. To what end? Verse 10 answers that. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." Amazing! The plan of God was not only hidden from men, but from angels. These "principalities and

powers in heavenly places” are angels. These ancient creatures have spent their entire existence in the presence of God, watching Him work out His plan. Can you imagine? They were there when Adam and Eve were created. They were there when Abraham was called out. They were there when the Jews were delivered from Egypt. They were there during the Babylonian captivity. They were there when the Lord Jesus Christ took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. They’re here today. They had observed the wisdom of God in creation and in providence. But the ultimate display of His wisdom is made known by the church! God creates and maintains the church by joining believers together as one body through the foolishness of preaching, and we are put on display to make known the manifold wisdom of God to angels. You see, there are cosmic implications to the church. The very existence of the church shows the manifold wisdom of God in the plan of redemption. It shows it in a way that couldn’t have been shown in any other way. This body that men find to be so contemptible is a source of wonder and amazement and wisdom to the angels.

The word “manifold” means “multi-colored, multiple sorts.” The angels see the variegated wisdom of God from many different angles. Nobody could have guessed how God’s plan would unfold, but as it does, they (and we!) can only stand back and rejoice at all the different aspects and details of it. And the angels see a lot more of it than we do, and they’re very interested in it. Some say this is talking about good angels; some say this is talking about bad angels. My opinion is it’s talking about both. Good angels see it and glorify God. Bad angels see it and understand that God, in His wisdom, has used them as unwitting tools in His hand to accomplish exactly what He intended to accomplish. The church exists, after all, according to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is central in His plan. And the plan cannot fail, because God purposed it. What He purposes, He accomplishes.

After all that triumphant language, Paul gives us a reminder that part of the purpose of God is that in Christ “we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.” This is surely one of the things that the angels marvel at. And it’s one of the many means through which God executes His plan. Boldness. Access. Confidence. Faith. These words should describe our prayers. We’ve been going through a lot of heavy doctrine, but if doctrine doesn’t bring you rejoicing into the presence of God, something is wrong. If you just enjoy reading the Bible and listening to sermons because it’s comfortable or intellectual for you, but you don’t pray, it’s time for you to take a look at yourself. Do you get easily distracted when you pray? Do you sit there and not know what to say? Is it a chore for you? Does it feel cold and impersonal? That’s because Satan knows how important it is. He wants to do what he can to keep you from communing with God. But through Christ, we have boldness and access with confidence. Not presumption or arrogance! But a freedom where we can tell everything to God, candidly, without fear of upbraiding. A privilege of admission into His presence. A confidence that He loves us and will not reject us. According to God’s eternal purpose, He has

determined to allow us into His presence, and that only happens through Christ and by faith in Him. He wants to hear from us. The Father wants to hear from His children.

We conclude in verse 13 where Paul links us back up to how he started in verse 1. The point of all this digression was to address the elephant in the room – he had been writing to them about spiritual blessings, the power of God, Christ being head over all things for the benefit of the church...but he was writing as a prisoner. If Christ is over all things, why is Paul a prisoner? If he's living such a blessed life, why is he a prisoner? Something like this could shake the faith of a babe in Christ, and Paul knows that. Well, the fact is, it's precisely BECAUSE Christ is over all things that Paul is a prisoner. This is part of the plan of God. It is through human weakness that God works. To suffer for Christ is a gift (Phil. 1:29) and is proof of being a true Christian (2 Tim. 3:12). In fact, if you're not suffering for Christ in some way or another, you're not a true Christian. To suffer for the sake of Christ is to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:24).

His point here is "I'm a prisoner of Jesus Christ, but if you understood the dispensation given to me by God, you'd understand that my tribulations are all part of the plan and are for your benefit and the glory of the church, and you wouldn't faint. They're needful. I wouldn't be able to carry out my stewardship in any other way, because this is how God determined it needed to be done." To say "I desire that ye faint not" is a very personal, touching, tender-hearted thing for Paul to say, and may be one of the things that prompted him to write the epistle – he was the one sitting under house arrest, chained to a Roman soldier, but he was concerned about the spirits of these Ephesians, and was worried that they would lose heart.

Now, I certainly understand how confounding suffering can be. These tribulations Paul went through no doubt involved physical and emotional dimensions, both for him and his loved ones in Christ. And I know how easy it is to feel like you're going to faint at such things. "Faint" means to lose heart, to be utterly spiritless, to be wearied out, to be exhausted, to grow discouraged, to lose courage. In other writings, the word was used to describe a woman during childbirth who reaches a point where she thinks she can't go on. But beloved, remember all the unsearchable riches we have in Christ. Remember the promises. Remember the eternal purpose of God. Remember the mystery of His will, that all things will be gathered together in Christ, and that He will return in glory. "Wherefore I desire that ye faint not." Lord willing, next time we will be able to go over Paul's prayer for strength and for an understanding of the love of Christ, finishing Ephesians 3.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)