

# Just Checking In

## JCI #198 August 2018

### The Missing Pieces

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**"Life is a mystery!"** No doubt, you've heard this statement many times. What is a mystery? The word indicates something secret, something behind a shut door that we cannot see. It's missing information, like pieces missing from a puzzle that keep the full picture from being fully understood.

**The Bible has no shortage of passages about mysteries.** Most of them revolve around the mystery that has been made known: **Christ Jesus**, the long awaited Messiah who brings **forgiveness, reconciliation, salvation, and reunion** of all who believe into **one everlasting family of God** in His everlasting kingdom. Consider the following instances of the revelation of the mystery of Christ that includes **the gospel**, the inclusion of the **gentiles in the church**, and the final redemption of **Israel...**

Luke 8:10 And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God...

1Cor 4:1 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Ro 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Rom 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began

1 Cor 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory...

Eph 1:9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

Eph 3:3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

Eph 3:4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

Eph 3:9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;

Eph 6:19 ... that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

Col 1:26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

Col 1:27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Col 2:2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,

Col 4:3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ...

1Ti 3:9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

1Ti 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Re 1:20 "The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands...

#### **The mystery of marriage as a type of Christ and the church**

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. **Then there are other mysteries regarding end time events...**

#### **The mystery of the Second Coming and our transformation**

1 Cor 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed--

## **The mystery of Satan's great end-time attacks and his certain and final doom**

2 Thess 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work...

Re 17:5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS ...

Re 17:7 ...I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her...

## **Then there are those passages that speak of mysteries not yet revealed...**

### **What our glorified bodies will be like...**

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and **it has not yet been revealed what we shall be**, but we know that **when He is revealed**, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

In the book called "Revelation" we find a particular revelation that was given to John but is kept hidden from us. It is fascinating to me that God gave it to John, and made sure we knew it was given to him, and yet is kept from us because it is not for us to know.

Rev 10:1 I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, **seven thunders** uttered their voices. **4 Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them."** 5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, 7 but **in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.**

Then there is Paul's experience relayed in 2 Corinthians about having heard things in heaven that God would not allow him to share with us...

2Co 12:2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago--whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows--such a one was caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I know such a man--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- 4 how **he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter...**

## **These are missing pieces... things we do not understand for now.**

**What God reveals is for our good and what God keeps hidden for now is also for our good.**

A dear friend named Bob went home to be with the Lord a few days ago. He had a 20-year battle with severe health issues related to Lyme disease. He and his dear wife Linda have walked this difficult road with faith and grace and a focus on God's goodness and promises. In the final weeks of his life, Bob began to work on puzzles given to him by family and friends. They were not little, simple ones, either! In our last visit before Bob's home-going I noticed on the table a beautiful unfinished puzzle: in a double, overlapping circle with cardinals. I mentioned that cardinals were my Mom's favorite birds. She had pictures, plates, and figurines of cardinals. They said no one had claimed it and I was welcome to have it. I was honored and gladly accepted.

(I then told them a story of how my three older sisters would put these large puzzles together on a card table in our living room during the long winter months in our farmhouse on Tug Hill in northern NY. I never had the patience to do puzzles, but being a naughty little brother, I would sneakily swipe one of the pieces and hide it until the puzzle was finished. I saw my sisters looking under couches and chairs, pulling cushions off the sofa, on their hands and knees... so I

went and got the missing piece, put it in, and ran off to the barn to escape!!! It was so satisfying to put that last missing piece in place!!! )

A few days after our visit, I received an email from Linda relating that this puzzle had 3 missing pieces and that I probably wouldn't want it. I quickly replied that it was perfect, and I wanted it just like that! Perfect! Life down here always has missing pieces, mysteries that remain, questions unanswered. But every question has an answer, every mystery will be revealed, every piece will be provided on that day when we see our Savior face to face. I then wrote the following poem for Bob and Linda, and I hope it encourages you as well. God has it all planned! Everything! And He will receive all the glory as He unveils the finished puzzle that includes every believer and every moment from everlasting to everlasting! Glory to His name!

## The Missing Pieces

Life is like a puzzle, one without the cover known  
Every day another piece is given still  
Sometimes they fit so easily, the shape, the color too  
But others seem just like they never will

Our God has planned this puzzle from before time had begun  
Each piece is crafted with the utmost care  
What seems for now to be all wrong, with Him will turn out right  
If we with patience wait and rest in prayer

Remember that this puzzle lacks some pieces here for now  
And God alone who made it knows the fit  
But if we trust His sovereign grace and look upon the cross  
Then we will find the faith to never quit

So take the pieces as they come, and look with eager eye  
To see the pattern of His loving grace  
For soon that perfect puzzle framed with glory we'll behold  
The day we see our Savior face to face

Written by Ron Berrus for Bob Olley, 7/19/2018

### Self Check Questions

- 1) Are you resting in God's sovereign grace and wisdom as you face the missing pieces in life's puzzle?
- 2) Are there missing pieces you need to stop looking for and simply trust God to provide in heaven?
- 3) Are there missing pieces God has provided and you can now look back and see the perfect fit and thank Him for?

### For Further Study

 John 21:18-22 and 2 Peter 1:12-15

Jesus revealed that Peter's death would be as a martyr with great pain. Peter, at that time, probably wished Jesus hadn't given these pieces him. Then Peter asked about John's death, but Jesus refused to provide those missing pieces. Peter was told to leave the missing pieces behind and follow Christ! Good advice for us all. The pieces revealed and the

pieces hidden are both for our good. God knows what He is doing. God will make it all clear in His time. For now, forever, trust and obey.

***Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.  
Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4 Ron & Val***

Seeing the Invisible,  
Embracing the Unapproachable,  
Declaring the Unexplainable,  
Changed by the Immutable,  
Running after the Irresistible  
With inexhaustible joy  
In our inexpressible sorrows,  
Spending our time on eternity,  
Owning nothing yet possessing everything  
That matters and lasts.  
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.  
Welcome to THE JOURNEY