SERIES ON EPHESIANS, PART 8

TITLE: "UNDERSTANDING THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL IN CHRIST"

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LOCATION: SUNDAY SCHOOL AT SANTA CLARITA BAPTIST CHURCH

I. Introduction

II. Memory Verse:

Ephesians 1:3

> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ.

III. Main Idea – God has revealed a profound mystery about summing up all things in Christ, as well as giving us the wisdom to grasp this mystery. We are challenged to apply this wisdom so that we can revel in its delights and praise Him for His glory.

IV. The Text (1:8b-10)

A. Receiving the wisdom to understand God's will (8b) – *In all wisdom and insight*

- *wisdom* is the ability to apply God-given knowledge in effective ways
- *insight* is the understanding you receive when you set your mind on God will
- *wisdom and insight* are part of the grace that God *lavished on us*
- Without profound understanding given to you directly by God, you would never be able to grasp His will in Christ

B. Knowing the mystery of God's will (9) – *He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him*

- *mystery* in the New Testament refers to things that were secret, but that have now been revealed to believers in Christ
- God delights (*"kind intention"*) in revealing His purpose in Christ

C. Understanding the execution of God's will (10a) – *with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times*

- *administration* ("dispensation" in the King James Version) translates *oikonomia* (from where we get the term "economics") means "household stewardship" or "management of affairs"
- *fullness of the times* refers to the end times, which began at the cross and continues until the Millennium

D. Grasping the focus of God's will (10b) – *that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth*

- The concept behind "*summing up*" is hard to comprehend, but basically means "bringing all things together, unified under Christ's authority"
- Because of the Fall, *things on the earth* have been severed from *things in the heavens* (1:3)—under Christ's rule, both realms will be brought together in perfect unity!