Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – October 6, 2019

**Lownes Free Church**

**The Mystery and Majesty**

**of Jesus Christ**

*How God’s Glory and Promises Find Fulfillment in His Son*

Exploring Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians

***Proclamation: From Mystery to Mission***

***Ephesians 3:1-13***

 This week our church commemorates 80 years of cross-cultural missions, that is, the endeavor of leaving one’s own culture and comfort zone to take the gospel and its blessings to those who don’t know Jesus. Sara (Sally) Zurrell left Philadelphia for Bolivia in 1939.

 But why? Where does missions begin? The short answer is “in the heart of God,” who has been seeking sinners since Adam and Eve. The whole Bible is about this love story, and our church is a recipient of that love, and now exists to glorify Him by taking His love to others.

 While the prophets knew that God was at work, none of them even suspected what was to come, that God would send His own Son to die for sinners and to bring diverse and warring parties of sinners together to form one new Temple, where he would dwell forever.

 In our text today, Paul lets us look “behind the curtain” into the very mind of God, who not only has revealed the Mystery through Jesus, but also ordains apostles to preach “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Through that global gospel proclamation, the nations are shaken with a spiritual earthquake that reverberates into eternity.

  ***Seven Elements of Turning Mystery to Mission. . .***

***Mystery: First, there are things only God knows.***

 Whatever it is, we could never have imagined it. Ever.

***Revelation: God had planned, and now has revealed, the Mystery.***

What was in His mind forever was never meant to be secret forever.

***Stewardship: God now has commissioned the Mystery to be shared.***

The secret was first published through Apostles and Prophets.

***Good News: Jew and Gentile are fellow-heirs of God in one Body, and fellow-partakers of God’s covenant promises. All of them.***

The diversity of the nations is preserved in the unity of the Church.

***Power: The source and motivation of the Mission is God’s grace.***

The messenger is sent/empowered by grace, not his merit or gifts.

***Goal: The result is the demonstration of the victory of God’s grace.***

Even demonic powers see God’s wisdom displayed in all its glory.

***Price: The gospel, from the beginning to end, goes out in suffering.***

Those who take the gospel to others must be prepared for struggle.



***Why it matters. . .***

*How does human “wisdom” often obscure our view of God’s? 1 Cor. 1:18-31*

*Why was God’s ultimate plan not revealed until Jesus? Galatians 4:1-7*

*How does the gospel “level” the status of the nations? Ephesians 3:6*

*Why does Paul stress his weakness and unfitness for the task? 2 Cor. 12:1-10*

*How can we, in our culture, embrace suffering for the gospel? 2 Tim. 2:3, 8-10*