

**“To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”**

*Riches of the glory of this mystery* Paul is now leaning into his theme, following on from the great hymn of praise a few verses earlier.

The mystery of which Paul speaks, hidden throughout the ages and generations.

That mystery is Jesus Christ.

Jesus both fully God and fully human.

How do we relate to Jesus?

Do we find ourselves drawn to his humanity or his divinity?

To the image of Christ walking along a road with his disciples

To the image of Christ coming in glory

See that in the murals around this church.

East end - scenes from Christ's ministry

West end - Christ returning in glory and in judgement

*Which is Christ in you*

If Christ being fully God and fully human and holding the fullness of both in himself is not enough.

We are told that the completion of this mystery is Christ in us.

Psalm 139: I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

But not you singular, you plural.

Not I but we. We as the body of Christ.

Conversations in pubs: “I don't need the church” - “you have more faith than me.”

Together in unity can the full riches of the glory of the mystery of Christ in us be seen.

Partnership - Paul & Timothy & Epaphras

St Mary's & Hope Church

In our unity as churches and members of the same body of Christ may the full riches of the glory of Christ be seen in and through us.

The St Mary's-Hope Church partnership is another step in greater unity in the body of Christ, in the church.

A unity which celebrates its differences, and a unity which rejoices in the diversity of the Kingdom of God.

But a unity which is built on that shared vision and shared prayers of the body of Christ, the church growing in depth, numbers and impact in our communities.

Paul goes on to say that this mystery, of Christ in us, is nothing short of the hope of glory.

That confident expectation of the majesty of God being shown in and through the body of Christ, through the Church.

Give - because without St Mary's being here since 628 AD, or Hope Church since 1814 the glory of God would be further from this community.

The riches of the glory of this mystery would be more distant from our neighbours and the people of Islington.

Give because in this place the hope of glory can be known through the church in this place.

Through us as the body of Christ here, in this community and across our shared partnership area.

**You and I are part of the hope of glory in this place.**

Next time you look in a mirror say to yourself "Christ is in me, the hope of glory".

I wonder how that will feel?

*Marrow - from a seed.*

The seed contains the hope of the fruit and the fullness of life in this marrow.

It is watered and given warmth by the rain and sun.

It is given nutrients by the soil in which it is buried.

And the hope becomes a reality as it grows and bears fruit.

The hope in us needs to be nurtured daily.

It needs to be watered and given warmth by the grace of God and the work of the Spirit in our lives.

It needs to be given nutrients by our prayers and encouragement of one another and through scripture and worship.

So that... **we may present everyone mature in Christ.**

Paul is inviting us into that work.

So that together we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Who are we encouraging, praying for, helping to grow into the full maturity of Christ?

When darkness seems to have the upper hand in the world - Gaza

How are we showing together in this community the hope of glory?

**“To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”**

Christ in you the hope of glory.

That truly is a mystery.

Yet we are invited into the work of the Spirit to make that hope more and more a reality in our lives, our community and our world.

How will we respond?