

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

1 Timothy 3:1-16

INTRODUCTION: 1 Timothy 3:16: Paul had been telling Timothy the proper way to behave themselves in the house of God. From that basic teaching of proper church foundation Paul rises to this grand delineation of the Christian faith: 1 Timothy 3:15. What Paul means by this statement is that it is the church of Jesus Christ that upholds the gospel, the revealed truth of Christianity. Mystery is Paul's favorite word for true Christianity. By mystery he means the great secret of man's redemption and salvation now revealed in Christ and proclaimed by His church.

I. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: HE WAS GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH!

No other man could ever make such a claim and have it stand the tests of truth. Jesus Christ alone was the Creator and sustainer of all that is. John 1:1-3, 14; 1 Timothy 3:16; Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-23. Jesus Christ was the only man who existed before his conception. In fact Jesus conception was not by a man it was of the Holy Spirit and a woman.

II. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT!

1 Timothy 3:16: Jesus was made manifest in the flesh, that is, in a human nature just like you and I. But in contrast with you and I, He was justified in His Spirit. You and I as sinners and unjust are justified by faith in the redeeming work of Christ on the cross. But Christ Himself needed no such sacrifice for He was justified in His spirit. He was blameless and sinless in His own life. John 8:46. Even the most saintly among us would never be able to ask that question in truth. Alone of all men since the time of the Fall, Jesus knew the joy of a conscience void of offense.

III. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: HE WAS SEEN OF ANGLES!

1 Timothy 3:16: He was seen of angles. Jesus' birth, life and death as well as His resurrection were all done in the sight of the angles. The whole population of heaven was interested in the mission of Christ. There are several passages that indicate the tragedy of Calvary was enacted not only for the benefit of mankind but for the instruction and inspiration of the angels: 1 Corinthians 4:9; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 1:12.

IV. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: HE WAS PREACHED AMONG THE NATIONS AND BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD!

1 Timothy 3:16: Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only truth worth being preached to the nations. Revelations 14:6-7. Some have always doubted the truth of Jesus' life and resurrection, but others have believed: Acts 17:34; Romans 8:35-39.

V. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: HE WAS RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY!

1 Timothy 3:16: What a day it must have been when our Lord Jesus ascended into heaven: Luke 23:42-43. If the angles rejoice at His birth, how much more at His return to glory!