

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2009**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
STEWARDS OF THE MYSTERIES OF GOD**

Message One

**The Economy of the Mystery,
the Revelation of the Mystery,
the Stewardship of the Grace of God,
and the Stewards of the Mysteries of God**

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:2; Eph. 1:9; 3:2-5, 9; 5:32; 1 Cor. 4:1-2

- I. In eternity God planned a will, but it was hidden in Him; hence, it was a mystery—the mystery of His will—Eph. 1:9; Rev. 4:11.**
- II. The church is the hidden mystery in God's eternal economy—Eph. 3:9-11:**
 - A. The mystery of the universe is God, the mystery of God is Christ, and the mystery of Christ is the church—Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4.
 - B. The eternal economy of God is of God's eternal purpose, God's determined intent; with a definite and strong determination God intends to have the church—1:9; 3:10-11; 2 Tim. 1:9.
 - C. According to Ephesians 3:4, the church has a particular title—the mystery of Christ.
 - D. In God's economy revealed in the New Testament, there are mainly two mysteries:
 1. The first mystery, revealed in the book of Colossians, is Christ as the mystery of God—God embodied, God defined, God explained, God expressed, and God made visible—2:2.
 2. The second mystery, revealed in the book of Ephesians, especially in chapter 3, is the church as the mystery of Christ—v. 4.
 - E. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery; the great mystery is the meaning of the universe and of human life—1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 5:32.
- III. Related to the mystery of Christ, the church, God's hidden purpose, there is the economy of the mystery—3:9:**
 - A. God's economy is His plan and arrangement to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen people so that He may have the church, the Body of Christ, as the mystery of Christ to be His corporate expression; hence, there is the economy of the mystery—1:3-23; 3:9.
 - B. The economy that God, according to the desire of His heart, planned and purposed in Himself is to head up all things in Christ at the fullness of the times; this is accomplished by the dispensing of the abundant life supply of the Triune God as the life factor in all the members of the church—1:10.

IV. God's hidden purpose is the mystery, and the unveiling of this mystery is revelation; hence, the Bible speaks of the revelation of the mystery—Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3, 5:

- A. The mystery of Christ, the church, was hidden in other generations but has been revealed in the New Testament age—v. 5.
- B. This mystery was hidden in God throughout the ages, but now the New Testament believers, having been enlightened, are able to see it—v. 9.
- C. God's hidden purpose is the mystery, and the unveiling of this mystery in the mingled spirit is the revelation of the mystery—vv. 3, 5.
- D. The mystery of Christ has been revealed to the apostles and prophets in their spirit by revelation—v. 5:
 - 1. The mingled spirit is the means by which the New Testament revelation concerning Christ and the church is unveiled to the apostles and prophets.
 - 2. When our spirit is mingled with the divine Spirit, our spirit becomes the organ in which the mystery of Christ is revealed—1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 1:17; 3:5.
- E. If we would see the revelation of the hidden mystery, we need to be strengthened into our inner man, our regenerated spirit, and allow Christ to make His home in our heart—vv. 14-17a.

V. The economy of the mystery has become the stewardship of the grace of God given to the apostles and to all the believers—vv. 2, 9; Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 9:17:

- A. In Ephesians 3 Paul uses the Greek word *oikonomia* with two denotations:
 - 1. In relation to God, *oikonomia* denotes God's economy—v. 9.
 - 2. In relation to us, *oikonomia* denotes the stewardship—v. 2.
- B. When the economy of the mystery came to the apostles, it became the stewardship of God—1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2, 9; Col. 1:25.
- C. The stewardship of God is according to the economy of God; with God there is the economy, and with the apostles there is the stewardship—Eph. 3:2.
- D. The economy of the mystery and the stewardship of the grace of God are actually one; this means that we should be doing what God is doing—carrying out the economy of the mystery through the stewardship of the grace of God—1:10; 3:2, 9.
- E. The stewardship of the grace of God is the ministry in God's New Testament economy—2 Cor. 4:1.

VI. As believers in Christ, we all should be stewards of the mysteries of God, which are Christ as the mystery of God and the church as the mystery of Christ—1 Cor. 4:1-2; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4:

- A. As stewards of the mysteries of God, it is most important that stewards be found faithful—1 Cor. 4:1-2; Luke 12:42; 2 Tim. 2:2; Rev. 17:14.
- B. If we would be faithful in our stewardship, we need to be one with the faithful God; only God is fully faithful, and we can be faithful only by being one with Him, constituted with Him, and the same as He is in His attribute of faithfulness—2 Tim. 2:13; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18-19; 1 Thes. 5:24.