

Message Five

**The All-inclusive Christ—
the Mystery of God's Economy and the Mystery of God**

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:25-27; 2:2-3; 1:15-19; 4:3; Eph. 3:3-4

**I. The all-inclusive Christ who indwells us is the
mystery of God's economy—Col. 1:26-27:**

- A. God's New Testament economy is like a great wheel, having Christ as its every part—He is the hub (the center), the spokes (the support), and the rim (the circumference) of the divine economy—Ezek. 1:15; Col. 1:17b, 18b:
 - 1. God's intention in His economy is to work Christ Himself into His chosen people so that Christ may be all and in all—3:10-11; Gal. 1:16a; 2:20; 4:19.
 - 2. Christ is the mystery, the secret, the crucial focus, of the divine economy; this means that the secret of the dispensing of the Triune God into God's chosen people is Christ Himself—Col. 1:25-28, 17b, 18b; 2:9.
 - 3. Christ is the Head of the Body (1:18) and the Body of the Head (1 Cor. 12:12); He is all the members and in all the members of the new man (Col. 3:10-11).
- B. The mystery hidden from the ages and from the generations has been made manifest to the saints; this mystery is the all-inclusive Christ as the indwelling hope of glory—1:26-27:
 - 1. The hope of our calling (Eph. 1:18b; 4:4b) is the hope of glory, which is the transfiguration of our body and the manifestation of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19, 23-25, 30; Phil. 3:21).
 - 2. The Christ who dwells within us is the mystery full of glory, with countless riches; we are being strengthened into our inner man according to the riches of God's glory, which are wrought into us for our beautification and return to God with us for His glorification—Eph. 3:16-21.
 - 3. Christ as the mystery of God's economy is indwelling us as the hope of glory to be wrought into us day by day for our transformation from glory to glory

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unto the full expression of God—2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 21:10-11.

II. The all-inclusive Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2:

- A. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the history of God; the whole “story” of God is in Christ and is Christ—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 4:5.
- B. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the definition, explanation, and expression of God—the Word of God; in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—John 1:1; Rev. 19:13; Col. 2:2-3.
- C. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the Firstborn of all creation—Col. 1:15; John 1:14; Isa. 9:6:
 - 1. Christ as God is the Creator (Heb. 1:10); however, as man, sharing the created blood and flesh (2:14a), He is part of the creation.
 - 2. Before the foundation of the world, even before anything was created, God had foreordained that Christ become a created man in order to accomplish His purpose; hence, in God’s plan and in His eternal view, Christ is the first one created—He is the Firstborn of all creation, the Head of all the created ones—Col. 1:15; Micah 5:2; 1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8.
 - 3. The creation was created in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ—Col. 1:16:
 - a. All things were created in Christ, in the power of His person; all creation bears the characteristics of His intrinsic power—Rom. 1:20.
 - b. All things were created through Christ as the active instrument through which the creation of all things was accomplished in sequence—John 1:3; Heb. 11:3; Rom. 4:17.
 - c. All things were created unto Christ as the end of all creation for His possession—cf. Acts 2:36.
 - 4. Christ is before all things, and all things cohere in Him as the holding center and hub of the universe—Col. 1:17.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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5. God's intention in His creation is to use the things of creation to illustrate the all-inclusive Christ; the entire universe came into existence for the purpose of describing Him as the image of the invisible God—v. 15.
- D. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the Firstborn from the dead—v. 18:
1. As the Son of God, Christ has passed through two births; the first birth was His incarnation for our judicial redemption, and the second birth was His resurrection for our organic salvation—John 1:14; Acts 13:33; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29.
 2. As the eternally preexistent One, He is our Creator for our existence, as the Firstborn of all creation, He is our Redeemer for our redemption, and as the Firstborn from the dead, He is the life-giving Spirit for our deification—Heb. 2:10-11; cf. Rev. 22:1.
 3. Christ is the first in resurrection as the Head of the Body; as such, He has the first place in the church, God's new creation—2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.
 4. Christ fully expresses the Triune God because He is the Firstborn of both creations, the One through whom both the old creation and the new creation came into being; the full expression of the rich being of God, in both creation and the church, dwells in Christ—Col. 1:15, 18-19.
- E. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the embodiment of God; from the time that Christ became incarnate, clothed with a human body, the fullness of the Godhead began to dwell in Him in a bodily way; and in His glorified body now and forever it dwells—2:9; Phil. 3:21; John 20:27-29.
- F. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the life-giving Spirit dwelling in our spirit to be one spirit with us; as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit, He is our life and our person—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:16-17.

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- G. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the constituent of His Body, the church, which is the mystery of Christ; not only Christ Himself as the Head but also the church as the Body are the manifestation of God in the flesh, the great mystery of godliness—Col. 4:3; Eph. 3:3-4; 5:32; 1 Tim. 3:15-16a; 4:7b.
- H. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ has the first place in all things—in the old creation and the new creation (Col. 1:18b), in the Christian life and experience (Rev. 2:4; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Gal. 2:20), and in the Christian work and messages (Eph. 2:10; 1 Cor. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:5).