

Message Four

The Mystery of God—Christ

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:2-3, 9-13; 3:1; 4:3;
Eph. 3:8-9; John 1:1, 14, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17

- I. In the Bible a mystery refers not only to things that are hidden and unknown but also to things that are hidden in God's heart; this is the principle concerning the mysteries mentioned in the Bible—Mark 4:11; Rom. 16:25-26; Col. 1:26-27; 2:2; 4:3; Eph. 1:9; 3:3-4, 9; 5:32; 6:19.**
- II. Colossians 2:2 says, “The mystery of God, Christ”; the mystery of God is manifested in Christ, so Christ is the mystery of God.**
- III. There are five great mysteries in the Bible:**
 - A. The mystery of the universe is God, who is the meaning and purpose of the universe—Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9.
 - B. The mystery of man is also God—Gen. 1:26; Zech. 12:1; 1 Cor. 2:11.
 - C. The mystery of God is Christ—Col. 2:2.
 - D. The mystery of Christ is the church—Eph. 3:4; Col. 4:3.
 - E. The mystery of the church is the organism of Christ, the Body of Christ as the enlargement of Christ—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4, 16; 5:30, 32.
- IV. In Ephesians *mystery* is a crucial word:**
 - A. In eternity God planned a will, but it was hidden in Him; it was a mystery—1:9.
 - B. God's hidden purpose is the mystery, and the unveiling of this mystery in the mingled spirit is the revelation of the mystery—3:3, 5.
 - C. God's mystery is His hidden purpose, and with this mystery there is an economy—the economy of the mystery—v. 9.
 - D. Christ is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ—v. 4; Col. 4:3.
 - E. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery—1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 5:32.
- V. The all-inclusive Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2:**
 - A. God Himself is a mystery, and Christ is the mystery of this mystery.
 - B. *The mystery of God* indicates something incomprehensible and inexplicable.
 - C. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the definition, explanation, and expression of God—the Word of God—John 1:1, 14:
 1. Although God is infinite and eternal, without beginning or ending, He also has a history, a story—Rom. 16:26; Psa. 90:2.
 2. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ—the mystery of God, the mysterious story of God—is the history of God.
 3. God's history refers to the process through which He passed in Christ so that He may enter into us, and we may be brought into Him; this process includes incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, glorification, and enthronement—John 1:12-14, 29; 3:14; 12:24; 14:20.
 - D. In this all-inclusive, extensive Christ as the mystery of God, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden—Col. 2:3:

1. Wisdom is related to our spirit, and knowledge is related to our mind—Eph. 1:8, 17.
2. God is the unique source of wisdom and knowledge—Rom. 16:27; 11:33.
3. This is the spiritual wisdom and knowledge of the divine economy concerning Christ and the church—Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 5:32.
4. Wisdom and knowledge also refer to all the “stories” of God.
5. All the wisdom and knowledge pertaining to God’s stories are hidden in Christ, who is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2-3.

VI. As the mystery of God, Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the God-head—v. 9:

- A. *All the fullness of the Godhead* refers to the entire Godhead, the complete God—v. 9:
 1. The word *Godhead* refers to deity and strongly indicates the deity of Christ.
 2. Since the Godhead comprises the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the fullness of the Godhead must be the fullness of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14.
 3. For Christ to be the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead means that the fullness of the Triune God dwells in Christ in a bodily form—Col. 2:9:
 - a. This implies the physical body that Christ put on in His humanity, and it indicates that all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ as the One who has a human body—John 1:14; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14.
 - b. Before His incarnation the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ as the eternal Word, but it did not dwell in Him bodily—John 1:1.
 - c. After He 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 (Phil. 3:21) now and forever it dwells.
- B. *Fullness* in Colossians 2:9 refers not to the riches of God but to the expression of the riches of God:
 1. The riches are the quantity of an object, whereas the fullness is the flowing out, the overflow, of the object to become the expression of the object.
 2. What dwells in Christ is not only the riches of the Godhead but also the expression of the riches of what God is:
 - a. God’s fullness is the overflow of His riches, and this overflow is God’s expression.
 - b. The fullness of the Godhead is the expression of the Godhead, the expression of what God is—v. 9.
 3. The Godhead is expressed both in the old creation, the universe, and in the new creation, the church—1:15, 18.
- C. When the Son of God was incarnated as a man, with Him was the fullness of God, and of this fullness we have all received—John 1:14, 16:
 1. In John 1:16 *grace* does not refer to the riches of grace but to the fullness of grace; the riches of grace are in God, but the fullness of grace is in Christ Jesus—Col. 2:9.
 2. The grace we receive is the fullness of grace; beginning from the time we are saved, we may receive grace upon grace.

3. The phrase *grace upon grace* in John 1:16 can be compared to the rolling waves of the sea that come in wave upon wave without ceasing.

VII. As believers in Christ, we are made full in Christ, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily—Col. 2:9-10:

- A. The Greek word translated “full” in verse 10 implies completion, perfection.
- B. Because all the fullness dwells in Christ and because we have been put into Him, we have been made full, filled with the divine riches—1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 3:8:
 1. All those who believe in Christ have been put into Christ; therefore, we are identified with Him and are one with Him—Gal. 3:27; 2 Cor. 5:17.
 2. We the believers have been put into the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, identified with Him, and joined to Him as our Husband; hence, we are one with Him—Col. 1:28; Rom. 7:2-4; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 3. Because we are one with Christ, we partake of all that He has accomplished, obtained, and attained; we inherit all that Christ has experienced and passed through, receiving all that He is and has.
 4. All that He has passed through is now our history, and all that He has obtained and attained is our inheritance.
 5. The result is that all that He is and all that He has belong to us, and all that He has experienced has become our history—Col. 2:11-13; 3:1.
- C. We need to have a full realization of what we have in Christ and to exercise faith to partake of all that is ours in Christ—Eph. 3:17.
- D. Because this fullness is all-inclusive, it accomplishes everything for us, it fully satisfies and supplies us, and it makes us full, perfect, and complete—Col. 2:9.
- E. We have the all-inclusive, inexhaustible fullness that dwells in Christ bodily, and in Him we are made full—Eph. 3:8; Col. 2:9-10.