

Message Nine

The Mystery of the Church

Scripture Reading: Rev. 10:7; Rom. 16:25;
Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23; 3:3-11; 1 Cor. 6:17

- I. Ephesians 3:3-11 reveals that we may experience and enjoy Christ as the mystery of the church.**
- II. God's hidden purpose is the mystery, and the unveiling of this mystery is revelation; 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. 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 to which the mystery of Christ is revealed—1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 1:17; 3:5.
 - D. 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.
 - E. In Romans 16:25 and 26 Paul speaks of the revelation of the mystery: “The proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages but has now been manifested.”
- III. The seventh trumpet, as the conclusion of the eternal economy of the processed Triune God, closes the present age of mystery; hence, Revelation 10:7 says, “The mystery of God is finished”:**
 - A. “To seal up vision and prophet” (Dan. 9:24c) is to close the age of mystery, that is, to finish the mystery of God (Rev. 10:7; 1 Tim. 3:9).
 - B. In the dispensations from Adam to Moses and from Moses to Christ, everything was unveiled, manifested, and there was no mystery.
 - C. It will be the same in the dispensation of the millennial kingdom and the new heaven and new earth—everything will be unveiled, and then there will be no more mystery.
 - D. Christ Himself (Col. 2:2), the church (Eph. 3:4-6), the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 13:11), the gospel (Eph. 6:19), the indwelling of Christ (Col. 1:26-27), and the coming resurrection and transfiguration of the saints as the end of this dispensation of mystery (1 Cor. 15:51-52) are all mysteries that were hidden in times of the ages (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:5; Col. 1:26).
 - E. All these mysteries will be completed, finished, and will be over at the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet.
 - F. At the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet, not only God's judgment of wrath upon the earth but also the mystery of God are finished.

- G. In the dispensation from the incarnation of Christ to the millennial kingdom—the church age, the age of grace—everything is a mystery:
 - 1. The incarnation of Christ, as the beginning of the age of mystery, is a mystery—1 Tim. 3:16.
 - 2. Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2.
 - 3. The church is the mystery of Christ—Eph. 3:4-6:
 - a. Christ is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ.
 - b. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery—5:32; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 - c. During the church age, the age of mystery, Christ is building up the church to be His bride—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:16; Rev. 19:7-9.
 - 4. The kingdom of the heavens, the indwelling of Christ, and the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints are all mysteries—Matt. 13:11; Col. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 15:51-53.

IV. The mystery of the church is the ultimate mystery in the universe:

- A. The church is the hidden mystery in God's eternal economy—Eph. 3:9-11:
 - 1. 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.
 - 2. According to Ephesians 3:4, the church has a particular title—*the mystery of Christ*.
 - 3. In the ages before the New Testament, the mystery of the church was hidden from men; it has been revealed to the apostles and the believers only in the New Testament age—v. 5; Col. 1:26.
 - 4. The mystery of the church was hidden from eternity past throughout the Old Testament times, but in the New Testament age it has been manifested to all the believers in Christ.
 - 5. In the New Jerusalem God obtains an eternal and full expression in the man whom He created; this is the ultimate mystery in the universe—the mystery of the church—Eph. 5:32.
 - 6. Our spirit needs to be strong and full of wisdom and revelation so that we may know the mystery of the church—1:17.
 - 7. The mystery of Christ and the mystery of the church are great and deep.
- B. The great mystery—Christ and the church—is the meaning of the universe and of human life—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 5:32:
 - 1. God's intention in His creation of all things, including man, was that man would be mingled with God to produce the church—Zech. 12:1; Eph. 3:9.
 - 2. The desire of God's heart is to have the mystery of Christ—the Body of Christ as the increase and expression of Christ—1:5, 9, 11, 22-23.
 - 3. The Body life is the ultimate satisfaction of our spiritual experience—5:30.
 - 4. The economy of the mystery hidden in God throughout the ages is the mystery of the church as the Body of Christ—3:9-10.
 - 5. The mystery of Christ and the mystery of the church should be our daily life; without this mystery, our life would be merely the life of a human being, not the life of a Christian—v. 4; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.