

Church in Regina

Living and Serving According to God's Economy Concerning the Church—Week 9

THE CHURCH BEING GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH

First Timothy 3:16 says, "Confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory." **The mystery of godliness is the manifestation of God in the flesh.** The manifestation of God in the flesh has **two aspects**. First, the manifestation of God was **by one person**. This was the **individual** manifestation of God in the flesh by Christ Himself. No doubt, verse 16 first refers to God's incarnation. Christ as the incarnated God manifested God in His flesh. But if we read the context of 1 Timothy 3:15-16, we can see that this manifestation of God in the flesh has another aspect, that is, **the corporate aspect**. The corporate manifestation of God in the flesh is **the church**. The church as the Body of Christ is the corporate Christ, the enlargement of Christ. **Christ was the manifestation of God in the flesh, and He was increased, enlarged.** Thus, the manifestation of God in the flesh was enlarged. We know this because verse 15 speaks of the church as the house of the living God. The house is something corporate. The church is presented in verse 15 as a corporate entity for God. The mystery of the manifestation of God in the flesh must be something related to the church as the corporate expression of God.

Verse 16 says that Christ in His manifestation of God was justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, and eventually taken up in glory. His being taken up in glory refers to His ascension into glory (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9-11; 2:33; Phil. 2:9). According to the historical sequence, Christ was taken up in glory in His ascension to the heavens before, not after, He was preached among the nations. Verse 16 of 1 Timothy 3 puts His being taken up in ascension after He was preached among the nations. Who or what will be taken up after the preaching of Christ? **No doubt, the Body of Christ, the church, will then be taken up in glory.** The Head was taken up to the heavens before the preaching of the gospel, but His Body, the church, will be taken up after a long period of the preaching of the gospel. Therefore, verse 16 must refer to the rapture of the church. Here the manifestation of God in the flesh must be not only the individual Christ but also the church as the corporate Body of Christ. This means that the church is God manifested in the flesh.

We saw in the previous chapter that the church as the Body of Christ is the issue of the Triune God. God the Father is the source, the Son is the element, the Spirit is the essence, and the church is the issue. God in Himself is three in one, but He has now become one with His chosen people, making them the members of Christ. **God has a desire and a good pleasure. He desires to dispense Himself into His chosen and redeemed people. He does not want to be alone.** God does not like to be a bachelor. The Bible refers to God as the Husband and to His chosen and redeemed people as His bride, His wife...

God in eternity past was a bachelor, needing one to match Him, and that one had to be something out of Him. In the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament, God's chosen people, His elect, are likened to His wife. In the Old Testament, Isaiah 54:5 declares that God was Israel's Husband. In Jeremiah 2:2 the Lord speaks of the bridal love between Him and His chosen people. In the New Testament the church is considered as the counterpart of Christ. Ephesians 5 says that the church is the wife of Christ. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 11:2, "I betrothed you to one husband." At the end, the conclusion, of the Bible, Revelation 22:17 speaks of the Spirit and the bride. The Spirit is the Husband, and we, His elect, are His counterpart, His bride. The Triune God in Christ as the Spirit and the church composed of His chosen and redeemed people are a universal couple. As the wife of Christ, the church comes out of her Husband and goes back to her Husband to be one entity with Him. **The church has the same life, nature, element, and essence as her Husband; therefore, in this sense, the church is divine.**

Although we were sinners, we have been redeemed out of our sinful position and sinful situation. We are now redeemed ones. God has put Himself into us, making us one with Him and also making Him one with us. First Corinthians 6:17 says, "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit." This is the great mystery of godliness—God manifested in the flesh. We are the same as God in the divine life, the divine nature, the divine element, and the divine essence, but not in the Godhead (Excerpts from Five Emphases in the Lord's Recovery, CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 2, p.49).

Local Announcements:

1. Prayer Mtg—Apr. 30 (Group 1—In person Group 2—Zoom)
2. Brothers' Mtg—Apr. 28—3pm
3. Church Activity / Blending Conference in Edmonton on May 3 to 5.
4. Summer Training Registration Deadline—May 1

Conferences and Trainings Information:

1. Chinese-Speaking Blending Conference—Feb.10-11, Taipei, Taiwan
2. International Training for Elders & Responsible Ones—Apr.12-14, Anaheim, CA
3. Memorial Day Blending Conference—May 24-27, Bellevue, WA
4. Summer Training—July 1-6, Anaheim, CA
5. International Training for Elders & Responsible Ones—Oct.4-6, Warsaw, Poland
6. Thanksgiving Blending Conference—Nov.28-Dec.1, Atlanta, GA
7. Winter Training—Dec.23-28, Anaheim, CA

Prayer Burdens

1. Lord, we want to follow You by living the life of a God-man – one who does not live by the human life but by the divine life so that God may be expressed and manifested in the flesh. May Your divine attributes be imparted into us to such an extent that we express it in our human virtues.
2. Lord even though we are *in the flesh*, save us from living *by the flesh*. We want to live in and by resurrection, always in our spirit to be Your expression. Be so real and practical to us today.
3. Bring the church to its fullest function as the mystery of godliness. May everyone who witness testify that You are among us.
4. Confessedly, great is the mystery of Christ and the church. As the ascended One, we are joined to You. Not only were You “taken up in glory” but also included the church, Your body. Bring our living to the standard in which God is expressed.
5. Lord, cause us to exercise ourselves unto godliness by exercising our spirit and living in the principle of incarnation. In our living, walking, and daily life, may our whole being be according to our spirit.
6. Lord, continue to manifest Yourself through the church. We exercise ourselves unto godliness not only individually but corporately. We are weak in ourselves, but You empower us to live in godliness.

North America/Europe/Other Burdens

1. Please pray for the Conference in Paris, France and Warsaw, Poland on May 3 to 5. Please pray that many saints will attend and for the release of the Lord’s burden and supply in these two conferences.

Church in Regina

1. Pray for the baptism of the new college students who will be joining the College Training.
2. Pray for the new ones. Encourage them each day to enjoy You, enjoy Your word, and exercise their spirit. Preserve them in the church and bless them sevenfold with Yourself.
3. Pray for positive and immediate approval of all the immigration papers of the newcomers and their settling down, that their personal lives will be blessed and that their church life will be enriched:
 - > Sorronda Family (Dana and Yeska)
 - > Alforte Family (Radam and Rosalina)
 - > Orolfo Family (Wilson and Jenny and their three children)
 - > Jerome Family (Pravin and Abinaya and their two children)
 - > Miranda Family (Ann Margarette and her family)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:

- Lord’s Table & Prophesying—Lord’s Day 10:00-12:00PM
- Prayer Meeting—Tuesdays 7:00-8:00PM
- Home Meeting—Wednesdays 6:00-7:00PM
- Chinese-Speaking Bible Reading—MW 8:30-9:00PM
- College Meetings—Fridays 7:30-8:30PM
- YP Meetings—Fridays 7:00-8:00 PM
- Children’s Meeting—Saturdays 10:00-11:00AM
- Small Group Meetings—Fridays/Saturdays 7:00-9:00PM

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