

THE HOUSE OF GOD AND THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

Text: 1 Timothy 3:14-16.

Delivered on: September 30, 2012. Streetsboro.

1 Timothy 3:14-16. These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; **15** but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. **16** And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

I. THE CHURCH IS THE HOUSE OF GOD.

- A. This is not referring to a physical structure but to the household of God.
1. God is the head of the household.
 2. Christians are adopted into that family as brethren. *Ephesians 1:5.* Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will
 3. Jesus is the our older brother.
 - a) **Romans 8:29.** For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
 - b) **Romans 8:14-17.** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. **15** For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." **16** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, **17** and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.
- B. What joy it ought to bring to our hearts to know that we are the sons of God. **1 John 3:1.** Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
1. As such, we have a name.
 - a) **Isaiah 62:2.** The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the Lord will name.
 - b) **Acts 11:26.** And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.
 2. As such we have a Father who:
 - a) Provides for us.
 - b) Will always be with us.
 - c) Will NEVER let us down.

II. PAUL SAYS THERE IS A CERTAIN WAY WE OUGHT TO CONDUCT OURSELVES IN THE CHURCH.

- A. We understand that there are certain accepted standards of conduct in our homes.
1. Have you ever seen a household where the children have never been taught how to behave?
 2. Have you ever seen a household where one or more of the children may have been taught how to behave but have decided to rebel?
 3. Such is a pitiable sight!
- B. In the House of God, we are not free to conduct ourselves as we see fit.
1. God does not accept just any kind of worship.
 2. Our worship must be in spirit and in truth. **John 4:24.**
 3. Worship according to man's doctrines is called vain. **Matthew 15:8.** And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

4. *Colossians 3:17.* And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

III. THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH - PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH.

- A. The truth.
 1. There is only one truth.
 2. The teachings of Jesus are the truth. *John 14:6.* Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
 3. God's word is truth. *John 17:17.* Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
 4. The truth is described as a narrow way. *Matthew 7:13-14.* "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. **14** Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.
- B. The church is a Pillar - support.
 1. The church is not the source of truth.
 2. The church serves as a foundation and support for God's revealed truth.
 3. The church proclaims the truth.
 4. The church defends the truth.

IV. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

- A. Definitions:
 1. Mystery.
 - a) Paul often uses this word to describe God's will which had not been known in past ages but had been revealed during his time.
 - b) *Ephesians 3:3-5.* How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, **4** by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), **5** which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:
 2. Godliness.
 - a) Literally - piety toward God.
 - b) Also means - the Gospel plan of salvation for mankind.
- B. God was manifested in the flesh.
 1. *John 1:1,14.* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
 2. *Philippians 2:5-8.* Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, **7** but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
- C. Justified in the Spirit.
 1. "Justified" usually refers to a sinner being acquitted and declared righteous by God.
 2. Obviously, that does not apply to Jesus.
 3. A second meaning of "justified" is to be "vindicated."
 - a) Jesus was vindicated by the Spirit.
 - b) *Acts 2:22.* Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know
 - c) *Romans 1:4.* And declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.
- D. Seen by angels.
 1. Angels announced His birth. *Luke 2:9-14.*

2. Angels warned Joseph to flee to Egypt. *Matthew 2:13.*
 3. Angels ministered to Him in the wilderness. *Matthew 4:11.*
 4. Angels strengthened Him in the Garden. *Luke 22:43.*
 5. He could have called 12 legions of angels to deliver Him from the cross. *Matthew 26:53.*
 6. Angels opened His tomb. *Matthew 28:2.*
 7. Angels escorted Him to heaven. *Daniel 7:13.*
 8. Angels prophesied His return. *Acts 1:10-11.*
 9. Angels will come back with Him on the Judgment Day. *2 Thessalonians 1:7.*
- E. Preached among the Gentiles.
1. The gospel was not for a single nation only.
 2. *Mark 16:15-16.* And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. **16** He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
 3. *Acts 2:38-39.* Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”
- F. Believed on in the world.
1. This is obviously a result of the preaching.
 2. *Romans 10:14-15.* How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? **15** And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”
 3. This belief leads to salvation. *John 3:16.* For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
- G. Received up in glory.
1. *Acts 1:9.* Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.
 2. *Daniel 7:13-14.* “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. **14** Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.