

"Mystery of Godliness"

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A.M.

Scripture Lesson:-

Text:- 1 Timothy:- 3:16.

Introduction:- The Bible states that godliness is a mystery. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness"

God is a mystery and it need not be surprising that many of the things which he has created are enveloped with mystery. Light, electricity, radar, nuclear energy, and life are among the creations of God where we meet with profound mystery..

God has given to man the privilege of making vast explorations into the mysteries of many of the things which he has made, there is a ceiling upon these explorations. There is a holy of holies of mystery in which man cannot penetrate. While man's explorations may go far in delving the secrets of God's mysteries, they eventually come to a dead end-road. The end of the dead-end road of man's research and investigation, is God. He, God is the first cause. God is the final ultimate. He is the first and the last, the beginning and the ending.

I.

The universe is a mystery with its vast array of heavenly bodies, moving with perfect precision in their orbits and in their relationships to each other. Without infallible accuracy in the movement of the heavenly bodies, a bedlam of chaos and destruction would reign among the planets and the stars. The most accurate timepiece which man can build, must be set by the movement of the stars for ultimate accuracy. There are many which are not appreciative of the world as the handiwork of God, filled with voices of mystery and paradises of beauty, proclaiming the inevitability of God. The attitude of those who are unappreciative of God, is well expressed in the words, "God is in this place and I knew it not".

II.

The incarnation of the Son of God in human flesh was a profound mystery, an unfathomable mystery. Angels stood amazed and in glorifying wonderment as they beheld the manifestation of the incarnation, in the birth of Jesus as a babe in the manger in Bethlehem of Judea. Their songs of praise and adoration, "Glory to God in the highest," still echoes across the hilltops of time and will continue to echo unto the furthest reaches of eternity. The incarnation was the crowning event of all that had preceded in human history and became the dividing line of history. In the incarnation God became and tabernacled in human flesh. Omnipotence was clothed in humanity. The hands that created worlds, became the hands of an infant in a cradle. The voice which, "as the sound of many waters", spoke into existence the suns with their systems and set them in their orbits, became the crying voice of a babe in dependence upon an earthly mother. The Son of God laid aside the robes of royalty, for swaddling clothes, and a crown of glory for a crown of thorns. He who is absolute in holiness bore our sins in his own body upon a tree. "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him". (2 Cor*-5:21.)

The incarnation stands as the crowning mystery of the ages, which will forever be the theme of angelic song and the subject of adoration and praise by an innumerable company washed in his precious blood.

III.

The birth of a soul into the kingdom of God is a mystery. Nicodemus questioned the new birth because of its mystery, saying, "How can these things be?" He said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit". (John 3:8)

The new birth which comes through repentance and faith in Christ, makes new creatures of lost sinners. Old things pass away and all things become new. Recently a Christian man had a very delightful visit with a business man in a mid-western city. He was no sooner seated in his office, than the conversation turned to the event of his conversion, which happened less than two years ago. Said the Christian, "His face was radiant and his words were full of praise as he told of the miracle which had come to his life."

With this man, old things had truly passed away and all things had become new. He was formerly nominally religious. Now he is vitally religious. He is a vital Christian. He formerly had no testimony. Now he is constantly testifying to Christ's saving power in his life. He formerly gave meagerly to the support of the Lord's cause, in proportion to his income. He is now giving twenty percent of his income for the Lord's work. He formerly regarded the business of soul winning as belonging primarily to preachers, and not to laymen. He now regards the responsibility of soul winning as resting equally upon laymen and preachers. As a layman, he accepts every call and opportunity that come to him to give his testimony for Christ. The Sunday previous to the Christian man's visit, this man had spoken in two different churches, telling of Christ's miracle working grace in his life. The transformation wrought in his life had been a mystery, it is a glorious reality.

IV.

Paul speaks of the resurrection as a mystery. He says, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be all ~~all~~ be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor: 15: 51 and 52). In the resurrection, the dead in Christ shall be raised first and shall obtain the glorious bodies like unto the glorious body of the Lord. There will be profound mystery in the resurrected bodies of the disciples of Christ, just as there is profound mystery in the resurrected

body of the Lord.

Our bodies will be made new so that they shall never incur the frailties that they now have to suffer. Springtime will be eternal in the resurrected bodies of the disciples of Jesus. These bodies will never grow old nor be encumbered with the handicap of fatigue. The fountain of life within these resurrected bodies, will flow with undiminishing splendor through all the eons of eternity. In these glorified bodies, the redeemed of the Lord shall live in the presence of him who said, "I am he that was dead; and behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Yes, great is the mystery of godliness. The mystery of the universe, the mystery of the incarnation and the mystery of the resurrection are great mysteries. But they were for us. We can experience only, the mystery of the new birth. Have you felt its life giving power? Have you experienced its power of making all things new. If you have not, come this morning and you too will find that its power is just the same power as it always has been.