

## Message Five

### Participating in God's Manifestation

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 3:15-16; John 1:1, 14; Col. 2:9; 3:4; 1 John 3:2

**1 Tim. 3:15-16** *But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth. <sup>16</sup>And 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.*

**John 1:1** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

**John 1:14** *And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.*

**Col. 2:9** *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*

**Col. 3:4** *When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.*

**1 John 3:2** *Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.*

**God's manifestation was first in Christ as an individual expression in the flesh—1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 2:9; John 1:1, 14:**

- A. In the incarnation Christ is God manifested in the flesh—1 Tim. 3:16.
- B. God was manifested in the flesh not only as the Son but as the entire God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 28:19.
- C. As the word, who is God, Christ became flesh (John 1:1, 14); therefore, He is God—the Triune God—manifested in the flesh.
- D. Christ in incarnation is the entire God manifested in the flesh.
- E. Through incarnation and human living God was manifested in the flesh—v. 14:
  1. *In the flesh* means in the likeness, in the fashion, of man—Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:7-8.
  2. In the form of a man Christ appeared to people, (2 Cor. 5:16) yet He was God manifested in a man.

- F. In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; *all of the fullness of the Godhead* refers to the entire Godhead—to the fullness of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Col. 2:9.

**First Timothy 3:15-16 indicates that not only Christ Himself as the Head is the manifestation of God in the flesh but also that the church as the Body of Christ and the house of God is the manifestation of God in the flesh—the mystery of godliness:**

- A. *Godliness* in 1 Timothy 3:16 refers not only to piety but to the living of God in the church, that is, God as life lived out in the church to be expressed.
- B. The church life is the expression of God; therefore, the mystery of godliness is the living of a proper church—1 Cor. 14:24-25.
- C. God is manifested in the church—the house of God and the Body of Christ—as the enlarged, corporate expression in the flesh:
1. The manifestation of God in the flesh that began with Christ continues with the church, which is the increase, enlargement, and multiplication of the manifestation of God in the flesh—John 14:9; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.
  2. This is Christ lived out of the church as the manifestation of God—God manifested in the flesh in a wider way according to the New Testament principle of incarnation—1 Cor. 7:40; Gal. 2:20:
    - a. The principle of incarnation is that God enters into man and mingles Himself with man to make man one with Himself—John 15:4-5.
    - b. The principle of incarnation means that divinity is brought into humanity and works with humanity—1 Cor. 6:17; 7:40; 1 Tim. 4:1.
- D. The great mystery of godliness is that God has become man so that man may become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead to produce a corporate God-man for the manifestation of God in the flesh—Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; Eph. 4:2.

**“When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory”—Col. 3:4:**

- A. That Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to take Him as life and live by Him so that we live Him in our daily life.
- B. In God, Christ—not our self, our soul—is our life—v. 4:
1. This life is now hidden but will be manifested.
  2. Then we will be manifested with this life in glory—v. 4.

**“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is”—1 John 3:2:**

- A. Since we are the children of God, we will be like Him in the maturity of life when He is manifested—v. 2.
- B. The children of God have a great future with a more splendid blessing:
  - 1. We will not only have the divine nature but will also bear His likeness.
  - 2. To partake of the divine nature is already a great blessing and enjoyment; yet to be like God, bearing His likeness, will be a greater blessing and enjoyment.
- C. The pronoun *He* in 1 John 3:2 refers to God and denotes Christ, who is to be manifested:
  - 1. When Christ is manifested, the Triune God will be manifested.
  - 2. When we see Him, we will see the Triune God, and when we are like Him, we will be like the Triune God.
- D. “We will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is”—v. 2:
  - 1. This means that by seeing Him, we will reflect His likeness—2 Cor. 3:18.
  - 2. This causes us to be as He is.