

1 Timothy 3:16

The Great Truth That the Church Guards: Christ Himself

Thursday, December 15, 2022 • Read 1 Timothy 3:16

Questions from the Scripture text: How sure is the doctrine in v16? What is the first thing that it says about the mystery? What is the mystery about? Who was manifested how? What did the Spirit declare about Him? What else was done to Him? By whom? What else was done to Him? Among whom? What else was done with Him? In where? What else was done with Him? Where?

What truth is the church especially to maintain? 1 Timothy 3:16 looks forward to the second reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In this verse of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the church is especially to maintain the truth about Jesus.**

Jesus Christ is the mystery of godliness. The rest of the verse makes this plain. And this helps us understand why it was so important that the church fulfill its function as pillar and ground of the truth. The great truth is the truth about Jesus. The truth about godliness that we could not know unless God told us is that godliness can come only through Christ.

Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. "God was manifested in the flesh." Those who resist such plain statements of Christ's divinity show how perverse and hard their hearts are. If men are justly judged for refusing the truth about God that He has made known via the creation, how much more greatly are they judged who refuse God's own display of Himself in the incarnation!

Jesus Christ is declared righteous by the Spirit. This was done at His baptism, when the Spirit rested upon Him like a dove, and God announced that Jesus was well-pleasing. And it was done most of all at His resurrection, in which He was vindicated both as God and as perfectly righteous (cf. Rom 1:4).

Jesus Christ was seen by angels. It is true that "angels" can generically mean "messengers." So, is this heavenly messengers or earthly preachers? Some have noted a pattern of earth-heaven—heaven-earth—earth-heaven in these six statements. But the fact of the matter is that, upon His resurrection, Jesus was witnessed by both heavenly messengers and earthly preachers. Whether man or angel, preachers of Jesus Christ are not wordsmithing abstractions. They are testifying to an historically resurrected Redeemer.

Jesus Christ was preached among the nations. This may not impress us so much now, but it was a great part of the mystery of godliness at the time of the apostles. Israel's Redeemer was for all the nations! His heralds were authorized, indeed commanded, to proclaim good news not just to Israel but to all.

Jesus Christ was believed on in the world. Here is more exercise of His saving power. Not only was He resurrected, but He resurrects souls. Not only has He mandated the preaching of the gospel; He gives the believing of the gospel. The cross was not a hypothetical offer of salvation, but the securing of it. Everyone for whom Jesus died would come to believe.

Jesus Christ was received up in glory. The church must believe and proclaim not only Christ's original ascension, but His continual reign until He returns. The Redeemer continues to sit in glorious power and rule. As the church is ruled by Him on earth, it enjoys that privilege in common with the highest heaven! His Spirit's work among us is a continual reminder that He Whom the Lord was to pour out from His throne has indeed been poured out, and therefore we may be certain that He continues to sit upon His throne.

By what means are you building up your doctrinal knowledge? Who, especially are you learning about?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You and praise You for revealing Yourself to us in the Person of Jesus Christ. We praise You, Lord Jesus—God and Man, perfectly righteous, absolute in authority, powerful to save and to reign forever and ever. Forgive us for taking doctrine lightly, and grant unto us instead to embrace and uphold and proclaim the truth about You, which we ask in Your Name, AMEN!

ARP110B "The Lord Has Spoken to My Lord" or TPH270 "At the Name of Jesus"

For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit bit.ly/harpCHAH

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

1st Timothy 3 verse 16. These are the words of god. 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. So, for the reading of gods inspired and An errant wort.

We learned last week in. Verse 15, that one of the reasons, That paul was so urgent to write. So that the church and ephesus might be. Properly, reorganized and reformation be brought. Was for reformation of doctrine. Because the church is a pillar and ground. Of the truth. That god has given the church the role.

Of. Proclaiming his truth in the world and especially Those truths which we would not know if god had not revealed then to us. Which in the new testaments are often. Uh, titled by this word mystery. And here is the mystery. Of godliness the truth. About how we can be godly.

The reason that the doctrine must produce godliness calledlinesses. Not possible without it. Is because it is jesus, who produces godliness is jesus. And whom we are counted righteous. Before god. And it is. Uh, jesus who Makes those who have been counted righteous in him to be righteous like him in their mind and their behavior.

And so forth. And so he says, and without controversy, or without a question. One of the things that should be obvious in the church and if it is an obvious, you don't actually have a church. If these things are not believed about jesus christ, the Things that are in the rest of this verse.

Then it's not part of the church. There's no question. Well, about these things. As far as the church is concerned. Now, it says, without controversy is the mystery of godliness God was manifested in the flesh. Now, the critical text, which is gathered from fragments had not been used in the churches throughout Uh, throughout the ages.

Does not have god here. So it has. Who was manifested in the flesh? But the vast majority of Text in particularly those that have been used in the church. Uh, throughout the ages. And an uninterrupted fashion, it does say god was manifested in the flesh.

It's obvious then. Uh, weather. The. Whether or not someone erroneously uses a critical text still obvious, that Jesus is the mystery of godliness. Uh, doctrine is all about him. Truth is all about him. He is. Uh, If we don't, The right way to understand. Any passage is to understand it.

And it's connection to the truth about Jesus Christ. The first part of this truth is that Jesus Christ is God, and man fully God and fully man. He didn't merely appear as if he were flesh. He is God from all eternity. Of course, he has to be There's only one way to be God and that's to be God.

What doesn't change? Um, but he is also added to himself a full humanity. He is manifested in the flesh. Those who resist such plain statements of Christ's divinity. So how perverse and hard their hearts are? If men are justly judged for refusing, the truth about God that he has made known in the creation.

Remember Robins one. And he's Revealed himself by way of the things that have made been made. We can see and learn much better as divine nature, even through the things that are made, then how much more Are they? Justly judged and condemned, who after God has revealed, that could not be learned from nature, in the person of his son.

And in the incarnation, the influxment Of his son. Then they are much more. Uh, most justly judged and condemned. The reject, the truth. Of the God, man. The Lord Jesus Christ. There are many. Who do those are those things? There are many who do both of those things. It's oppress the truth in unrighteousness but here is One of the great truths.

That the church is to maintain that we are to believe. In which is found life in godliness. God was manifested. For the flesh. Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. Is justified in the spirit declared righteous by the spirit. This is done, it has baptism. Um, as God was amazing from heaven.

That Jesus Christ, it is beloved, son, and that with him, he is well pleased, which is exactly the opposite of what God sees when he looks at the heart that men for you remember from Genesis 6 and then again afternoon it gets off the boat. He says similar thing about him.

Um, And there are statements throughout scripture, but Jesus Christ is well pleasing. He is perfectly righteous. So also the Holy Spirit attests. Uh to what is said from heaven by descending upon him or making an appearance of descent upon him. As a dove. At Jesus's baptism. And then even more than that, it is by the spirit.

That Christ has raised from the deadness as a reminder, of course of the doctrine maternity because various scriptures will say that Christ. Uh took up his own life again or that the father raised him up again. And Romans 1 opening verses there, it's a spirit raised him up again And declaring him to be the son of God with power.

At his resurrection. This is wonderful because it tells us. Both that Jesus Christ is perfectly righteous and That even in union with us, he is still perfectly righteous for his born. The wrath that our sin deserved and our sin and its guilt have been put away. And so he is justified in the spirit or declared righteous.

By the spirit, Jesus Christ. In the next place has seen by angels. Now, the word angels can mean generically messengers or preachers, which is probably what it means when Uh, when the scripture says, the angel of the church act etc in Revelation 2 and 3. So, the word angel can be messenger, but there are beings who Who are messengers unto us spiritual beings who are messengers unto us from God.

That also go by the name angel. So which Of these as a talking about. Well, it's talking about both. Angels, of course, testified to him. His resurrection. Um, And, At other times. And they had seen him, but also those especially who are going to be preachers of the gospel, the messengers, Of the gospel, saw the Lord Jesus after he rose again from the dead.

He appeared of course to Peter and the 12. And to 500 about him. The. Apostle reminds us in first Corinthians 15 and even Uh, to Paul himself. In visions. Um, there's one who is apostleship comes. Uh, in and unnatural way or not the same way as everyone else. And so those who preach the Lord Jesus are not preaching, figments of their imagination, or even merely words that they have heard those.

Um, those who initially preached Christ. Preaching, a Christ whom they could see seen They were, i witnesses. And so, These glories of God becoming a man and And the God man obeying in our place and atoning for our sin and still coming out on the other side, perfectly righteous.

These are glories that come to us. Um, not in. Some. On reliable way or some mystical way. Uh, but By way of eyewitnesses. The Lord has affirmed and confirmed to us. The truth about salvation in Jesus Christ of the truth about Jesus Christ himself by giving it to us by way of eyewitness.

And so he wants us to be sure. And we respond rightly to him. When we have that confidence, that is from him. Being sure that the incarnation really did happen that Jesus living a righteous life and dying in atoning, death really did happen. And that Jesus rising again from the dead.

Really did happen. Well, he was seen by angels and therefore he was preached among the nations. Now. That does not seem to. Uh, does not strike us as odd as it would strike the first century believers. Because up until that time. Uh, God's word and the revelation of God's truth that could not be.

Discerned merely from the creation. Had been limited pretty much to Israel. Of what advantage has the Jew? The apostle asks in Romans and one of his answers is well chief First and foremost they have the oracles of God, the words of God. And yet there had been these prophecies of the nation's being gathered in And good news being announced to them.

And, Now it has happened. Jesus Christ. Not only lit, became a man and lived and died and rose again and revealed himself to messengers. Who would preach in But this was the occasion that the gospel broke forth and was limited was not any longer limited to Israel. But was sent to all the nations.

This is God's. Great mercy to us. That. He has proclaimed. The good news of his salvation, Jesus has by way of his preachers by way of his messengers and here we are gentiles from other nations thousands of miles and thousands of years away. And we have heard it. Uh, this is God's doing, this is Christ's doing and it is part of the honor of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

That God ordained that when his son had accomplished the salvation that it would be at that point that the gospel went forth. Um, not only in jerusalem and judea but even unto Samaria. The northern kingdom that had a covenantal interest in. The promises of lord, and all the earth.

To whom the lord had made promises of salvation and of course he didn't just give that he would be preached uh among the nations or among the gentiles, but that jesus would be believed upon in the world. That in the whole cosmos as it were. Um, the lord jesus is now Believed upon the faith that that Believers have in christ as also a gift from christ.

It is part of the proof of who jesus is and what he has accomplished that his spirit continues to give Uh, people faith in him. To be joined to him by that faith to be counted righteous in him by that faith to grow by the his grace to grow by knowing him.

This work that the holy spirit continues to do, he does As a testimony to the reality of who jesus is. And what jesus? Has done. And therefore, Since we see the spirit doing this work. Not only is it a testimony to what jesus has done, but it is a testimony to where jesus is That he has been received up in glory.

He told his. A disciples that it was necessary that he go away in order that he might pour out the holy spirit upon them. And so, in the holy spirit, is poured out on the day of Pentecost. And as the holy spirit continues to bring the gospel to Uh to all the nations as the holy spirit helps you and gives you faith convicts you of sin convicts you of christ.

And And his righteousness and that there is sure hope in him and salvation as the holy spirit does all these things he is continually confirming to us. That jesus christ sits on the throne of glory. That he does have already. Now all authority in heaven and on earth and as he sits on the throne of glory, it is by his spirit that the making of disciples occurs on earth.

That is by his spirit, that they're keeping all that he has commanded occurs on earth. And therefore, we have That. Sign. But she has given as a seal of all of these things, the sign of baptism in which water is poured on earth. Just as the lord jesus has poured, the spirit from heaven.

And so you have this wonderful concise. Pattern of sound words. As it were this one, of course in the scripture itself but giving us An example. Of. A very concise systematizing arrangement of scripture truth. And in this case, scripture truth about the lord jesus christ. Who he is? What he has done.

What he is doing. And how he is affirming to us. That all of these things are true. God was manifested in the flesh. Jesus christ is god and the flesh. Justified in the spirit. Jesus christ has declared righteous. By the spirit. Seen by angels. Jesus Christ has seen by messengers.

Preached among the gentiles. Jesus christ has been preached among the nations. Believed on in the world. Jesus christ has been bringing people to faith and him by his spirit wherever he is preached. Received up in glory. Jesus christ was received up in glory and that's Where he is now.

And from whence, it will come again. Let's pray. Her father in heaven, we pray that you would Uh, keep our church and all churches. Faithful and clinging to and proclaiming these truths about your son, our lord jesus christ, we pray that you would make us to be sure. Even as you have confirmed, what he has done at who he is.

By his rising from the dead by the witnesses. By the preaching. That has been sent by the believing that continues to happen. Make a certain about our redeemer. To sits on the throne of glory. That we may rest in him and rejoice in him. And that we may look forward to his return.

We ask these things in his name. Amen.