

Godliness

by Sam Willcut

When we look at the purpose statement for Paul's first epistle to his young protégé, Timothy, then we see that the "the mystery of godliness" comes to the forefront (1 Tim. 3:14-16). Yet, we should not be surprised that the message bubbling from within Paul by inspiration and the motivation that prompted him to face such severe persecution (cf. 2 Cor. 11:24-28) was this mystery, which elsewhere he refers to as "the mystery of Christ" (cf. Eph. 3:1-13; Col. 4:2-4). As a matter of fact, he had already briefly introduced this earlier in the context when he discusses the qualifications of deacons and stated, "They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience" (1 Tim. 3:9). This concept—"the mystery of godliness" or "the mystery of the faith"—simply refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the means of attaining the quality of godliness. As Paul is about to discuss such, the phrase "without controversy" (1 Tim. 3:16) comes from a Greek term that refers literally to one who confesses. In fact, one translation renders this expression as "common confession" (NASV). In other words, this is a declaration of absolute confidence.

What is that to which Paul is absolutely confident? The object of such is the great "mystery of godliness." The word "mystery" is from the Greek word *musterion*, which we find twenty-seven times in the New Testament. Unfortunately, our English translation of this term often brings to our minds a different understanding of what this word actually means. I know that when I think of this term, I often think of the related adjective "mysterious," and one might also think that this term applies to that which

is impossible to understand. However, this word is better understood by the term "secret," just as we see this concept in the Old Testament: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). This is one of my favorite verses in the Bible, and it poses a contrast between that which is "secret" and that which God has revealed; thus, we are able to understand what this term "secret" (or "mystery") means, for it is as Paul explains in Ephesians 3: "...how the mystery was made known to me by revelation..." (Eph. 3:3), and Paul goes on to explain that it was not revealed earlier, but was now revealed to him and other inspired writers for the purpose of enlightening everyone through the sacred scriptures that they wrote (Eph. 3:2-7). As a matter of fact, Jesus used this term to explain to His twelve apostles why He spoke in parables (Mark 4:11); it was not time yet to reveal everything. In other words, that which one time was unrevealed is now revealed in the word of God! The gospel is no longer a mystery or "sacred secret" today, as it once was (cf. Rom. 16:25-27; 1 Pet. 1:10-12)!

Therefore, Paul does not refer to this "mystery of godliness" as being "great" because there is no way of understanding it, but because this revealed secret—the message now revealed—is a great message of a great God and has great consequences for us! As Paul will discuss the great "mystery of godliness," he will do so through six propositions that are rooted in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Please consider a discussion of these six propositions in the other articles of this issue, and may we all benefit thereby!

JESUS

THE PERFECT LEADER



THE WESTHILL SUMMER SERIES 2015

Compassionate Leader (June 3) • Servant Leader (June 10) • Redeeming Leader (June 17) • Humble Leader (June 24) • Bold Leader (July 1) • Forgiving Leader (July 8) • Visionary Leader (July 22) • Motivating Leader (July 29) • Transformational Leader (August 5) • Prayerful Leader (August 12) • Charismatic Leader (August 19) • Sacrificial Leader (August 26)

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Mission Works

Westhill Works

Benevolence Program

Local Works

Cherokee Children's Home - www.chc4kids.org
House to House, Heart to Heart
Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies
The Truth in Love - www.ttil.tv
WVBS Online School - school.wvbs.org

Prison Works

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works

New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

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Prayer List

Continue to Remember: Bill Abercrombie, Yvonne Ainsworth, J.D. Beggs, Don Bowen, Melba & Eleanor Bower, Wanda Brown, Anita Hawkins, Marjorie King, Velma McDougald, Ruth Moore, Eula Parrish, Irene Ross, Randy Short, Pat Wheat, Willie Winters, Meagan Gould, Dalton McCullough, Carl Schmidt, and Jayme Shafer.

Service Men: Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Josh Moehring, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart, Morgan Weaver, Payton Weaver

Announcements

Sue Thompson Turns 86 on June 13th! She would be encouraged by cards from her Westhill family. Those can be sent to: Sue Thompson, 806 Love Ct., Harker Heights, TX 76548

SYS Tuesday Night at Bridgewood Church of Christ. We will leave the building at 5:00.

Westhill Ladies Are Invited to eat lunch together (Dutch treat) this Wednesday, the 10th, to celebrate June birthdays. We are going to meet at Fiesta Grill at 11:30. All ladies are invited, ESPECIALLY those with June birthdays.

VBS Meeting this Wednesday night in the Family Room after services. VBS will be July 13-15

Camp Ida is Next Week! We will leave the building next Sunday morning at 6:00 AM. Please, be here by 5:30 AM to load the bus so we can leave on time. We will arrive back Friday evening around 5:00 PM.

A Kids for Christ Devo will be hosted at Don & Vicki Ivy's house Saturday, June 20 at 5:30 PM. Please, contact Greg Olsen if you'll be able to attend.

Days in the Sun - The Kids for Christ (5th grade and younger) will have a service project on Sunday, June 28 in the Outreach Center following the morning worship service.

Youth Mission Trip to Leonard is July 18-23.

Online Registration for our Leadership Initiative, "Radical," is now open. All young men, aged 13-20, are encouraged to join us July 31 - Aug. 2. Register now at www.westhillchurchofchrist.org.

10th Annual Ladies Retreat! Grab a friend and join us for a wonderful time Sep. 25-26 at Summers Mill in Salado, TX. Cost is \$65 for the retreat and \$12 for the T-shirt (optional). There's still room. Sign up before June 26 to ensure your spot!

The Ladies at Eastside Church of Christ invite our ladies to their 10th annual Ladies' Day program on June 27 at 9:15 AM. Charlene Milton of Fairfield and Rowena Winfrey of Corsicana will speak on "Walk in the Light: Letting Your Light Shine for Jesus."

Birthdays This Week

June 7 - Turner Jones, Corey Newton
June 12 - Mary Butler, Billie Murphey

Next Week's Class

The Great Restoration
Ezra 1-2

Records for May 31, 2015

| | |
|--------------------|------------|
| Bible Class | 196 |
| AM Worship..... | 289 |
| PM Worship | 120 |
| Wednesday | 178 |
| Contribution | \$9,276.91 |

Privileged to Serve

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Song Leader | Zach Drain |
| Opening Prayer | Joshua Haden |
| Communion Leader | Greg Olsen |
| Communion Servers | |
| Scott Barham | David Baumgartner |
| Bryan Bearden | Dan Gibson |
| Wade Hall | Don Ivy |
| Michael Jones | Gene McDougald |
| Buck Murphy | Rick Newton |
| Aubrey Parrish | Austin Roughton |
| Closing Prayer | George Schmidt |
| Nursery | Julie Hand & Kathi Pruitt |
| PM Song Leader | Mark Blaylock |
| PM Opening Prayer | Billy Roughton |
| PM Closing Prayer | David Mahoney |
| Wed. Song Leader | Tyler Baumgartner |
| Summer Series | Rusty Owens |
| June Contact Elder | Percell Milton - 903.6731819 |