

## INTRODUCTION

A great mystery has been revealed to us in the Bible by the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ:

God is manifest in the flesh! Emmanuel, God is with us! God is one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And that second person, the Son of God, has taken to Himself our humanity. He has lived the perfect life we should have lived, but didn't. He has been cruelly tortured and killed by scourging and crucifixion, to pay the penalty we deserved for our sins, to shed His own blood for our cleansing from sin. He was buried, but on the third day He rose again from the dead.

He was shown to be God manifest in the flesh by the work of the Holy Spirit.

He was seen and testified to as God manifest in the flesh by angels.

He was and is still preached to the Gentiles, proclaimed to the nations.

And, as we see in today's text, He was and is believed on in the world.

## TEXT

1 Timothy 3:16 KJV And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

## BODY

- I. The Way For Man To Be Saved Always Has Been To Believe God
  - A. The Bible tells us this
    1. Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah...prepared an ark for the saving of his household...
    2. Jonah 3:5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.
  - B. A person believes when he acknowledges that the message he receives from God is, indeed the word of God
    1. when it was spoken directly by God, as in the case of Noah, or Abraham, or the Israelites at Mount Sinai
    2. or when it was spoken by God's prophets, as Jonah spoke to the people of Ninevah
    3. or when a person encounters it in written form in the scriptures, the Bible; either by
      - a) reading it himself; or
      - b) by having it read to him
      - c) or having it preached to him from the scriptures
  - C. [1689.14.2] Then, recognizing in God's word the authority of God himself, by faith
    1. he yields obedience to God's commands
    2. he trembles at God's threatenings
    3. he embraces God's promises
  - D. Firmly connected to believing is repenting,
    1. as was read to us about the king and nobles of Ninevah, who commanded that the whole city
      - a) humble themselves before the Lord, showing it with fasting and wearing sackcloth
      - b) turn from their evil ways
      - c) cry to God for pardon
    2. repentance is so firmly connected to believing that, in the Bible, one is often spoken without mention of the other, even though both are necessary to salvation from God

The way for man to be saved always has been to believe God

- II. Jesus Christ, God Manifest In the Flesh, Declared That Man Is Saved By Believing In Him
- A. John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever **believeth in him** should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be **saved**.
    - 1. saved from being condemned and perishing
    - 2. saved to everlasting or eternal life
  - B. When men thought that they would be saved by doing certain good works that God required, the Lord Jesus corrected them: John 6:28-29 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" (29) Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."
  - C. Jesus Christ explained how it could be that we men who all die would have everlasting life: John 6:40 NKJV And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and **I will raise him up at the last day.**"
  - D. You gather from this that Jesus Christ knows Himself to be God manifest in the flesh
    - 1. salvation is by faith in God
    - 2. He declares that salvation is by faith in Him
    - 3. therefore He knows Himself to be God manifest in the flesh
  - E. APPLICATION: Let no one trick you into thinking that salvation comes by any other way than by faith in Jesus Christ
    - 1. not by the Roman Catholic formula of being saved by faith in Christ plus faith in your own religious works
    - 2. not by the Lutheran or Campbellite formula of being saved in baptism
    - 3. not by the crusade formula of being saved by walking down to the front of the church and saying a certain prayer
    - 4. not by the popular formula of being saved by having a relationship with GodSalvation always has come from God by faith in Him, in His Word; salvation comes when God manifest in the flesh is believed on!
  - F. APPLICATION: Have your hope not in the things of this world, but in the resurrection at the last day, when Jesus comes back
    - 1. there are many blessings from God on the disciples of Jesus Christ in this life.
    - 2. but salvation through faith in Jesus Christ does not make us exempt from troubles as we live in this sinful world.
      - a) Jesus said, "In this world you will have tribulation."
      - b) His apostles said, "Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God."
    - 3. let every ache or illness in this body, every tear in these eyes, every sorrow in these hearts, make you look hope to the Lord Jesus Christ, make you long for the day when He will come back and raise us incorruptible to be with Him forever

The way for man to be saved always has been to believe God  
Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, declared that man is saved by believing in Him

### III. When God Manifest in the Flesh Is Preached, He Is Believed On In the World

- A. Example in Asia - Acts 13 - the synagogue in the city of Antioch in the country of Psidia
1. preached to the Gentiles Acts 13:38-42 Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is **preached** to you the forgiveness of sins; (39) and by Him **everyone who believes is justified** from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. (40) Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: (41) 'BEHOLD, YOU DESPISERS, MARVEL AND PERISH! FOR I WORK A WORK IN YOUR DAYS, A WORK WHICH YOU WILL BY NO MEANS BELIEVE, THOUGH ONE WERE TO DECLARE IT TO YOU.' " (42) So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the **Gentiles** begged that these words might be **preached** to them the next Sabbath.
  2. believed on in the world Acts 13:44-48 On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. (45) But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. (46) Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. (47) For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I HAVE SET YOU AS A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES, THAT YOU SHOULD BE FOR SALVATION TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.' " (48) Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life **believed**.
- B. Example in Europe - Acts 16 - the jail in the city of Philippi in the country of Macedonia
1. preached to the Gentiles Acts 16:30-31 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (31) So they said, "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved**, you and your household." (32) Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.
  2. believed on in the world Acts 16:33-34 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. (34) Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, **having believed** in God with all his household.
- C. APPLICATION - Two balancing truths for us regarding salvation for our loved ones
1. God has caused whole households all to hear the word of the Lord about God manifest in the flesh, and whole households to believe and be baptized
  2. yet, in all cases, when sinners hear of God manifest in the flesh, it is as many as have been ordained or appointed to eternal life that believe; that many, no fewer, no more

## CONCLUSION

- IV. APPLICATION - Let the church not lose confidence in the mystery of godliness, in the truth, in the gospel, in the message of salvation
- A. the gospel of Jesus Christ crucified, buried, and risen again is still the gospel; there is no better message, because that message is the truth, and is the good news
  - B. God is pleased
    1. sometimes in some places to cause many to believe on Christ in the world
    2. some other times in other places to cause few to believe on Christ in the world
    3. where He is pleased to do these things by His Holy Spirit varies across the centuries, by a plan not revealed to us
  - C. let the church not stray
    1. neither from the mystery of godliness as to the message of God manifest in the flesh
    2. nor from the mystery of godliness as to the method, preaching
    3. nor from the mystery of godliness as to the expected outcome: He is believed on in the world

The way for man to be saved always has been to believe God

Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, declared that man is saved by believing in Him

When God Manifest in the flesh is preached, He is believed on in the world

Stephen - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Isaiah 43:9-11

Andrew - Scripture Reading - Jonah 3:1-10

Dillon - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - John 14:1-3

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 587 "Like a River Glorious"

Rita - Trinity 293 "Let Children Hear" + 7 "Now Blessed Be"

Rita - Trinity 435 "Jesus Christ the Crucified"

Romans 4:3-5 NKJV For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS." 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

1 John 3:23 NKJV And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

1 John 5:1 NKJV Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

- I. What It Is to Believe In God Manifest In the Flesh
  - A.
- II. The Record That God Manifest In the Flesh Was Believed On In the World
- III. The Connection Between God Manifest In the Flesh Preached and Believed