

THE MYSTERY OF GOD SHALL BE FINISHED

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THE MYSTERY OF GOD SHALL BE FINISHED

Introduction: The Mysteries of Scripture

In The Days of the Voice of the Seventh Angel, the Mystery of God Shall Be Finished

Nothing God does is without purpose. Behind the outward events of history is a coherent, mastermind plan that has been at work across the ages, “*the eternal purpose*” (Eph 3.11).

That purpose is also known as “*the mystery of God*” (Rev 10.7).

That mystery is explicitly stated to be part of the message of the angel/messenger to Laodicea, the last of the seven churches of Asia.

- Rev 10.7 in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, ***the mystery of God should be finished***, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

As Bro Branham, that angel/messenger, said,

- ***the mysteries of God, is the ministry of the seventh angel... reveals all the mysteries that's been in the past, all the things in the past... he is to finish all the mysteries of God.*** **63-0318 - The First Seal, par 68**

In fact, that mystery is at the very core of the plan of redemption to restore all things lost at the Fall.

- Acts 3.21 (Christ) whom the heaven must receive ***until the times of restitution of all things***, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

The understanding of the full original faith was progressively lost over the first four Church Ages, then progressively recovered from the fifth (Reformation) Age on.

Over the years the Mystery of God has been continuously at work. God has been seeking to fully unveil and bring His purpose and mystery to completion, pressing to get the revelation of it to His Church to awaken her to the power lying dormant within her so that she shines as never before.

That completion will certainly come, for (as just seen) the Bible speaks of the day when, “*the mystery of God should be finished*”. When will that be? At Christ’s 2nd Coming; at the end of the seventh, Laodicean, Church Age.

Laodicea, is a paradox. Although not a single good thing is said of this church, yet there are overcomers. And those overcomers have many very blessed things to look forward to.

Not least of these is the finishing of the Mystery of God.

As Bro Branham, said,

- People don’t know the mystery of God... ***you must know the mystery of God! ... This grand, old Holy Ghost Church is going to come out one of these days and shine like you've never seen! ... God is waiting, and trying, and pressing to get at the mystery of God revealed to His Church. That's what's a holding back the Coming of Christ now, and the great Millennium, is this great supernatural power that really lays dormant in the Church.*** **56-0617 - Revelation, Book Of Symbols, par 62,64,66,70**

- ... down through the ages, He's been gradually letting this out, ***slowly unfolding the mystery through the prophets and through the types...*** but yet the mystery was hid... ***holding it back in the last days for the great revelation... never giving His secret in full, waiting for to make it known in the last days, as He promised (Rev 10.7), waiting for it to be fully comprehended before He could express it.*** ***"Christ Is the Mystery of God Revealed" (63-0728), par 191, 203***

The Mystery Was Hidden from the Beginning of the World

Conceived before the world began, the mystery was hidden in Old Testament times (though foreshadowed there).

- Ro 16.25 the mystery, which was ***kept secret since the world began***
- Eph 3.9 the mystery, which ***from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God***

In the Church Age it was revealed to and by the apostles, the stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor 4.1).

- Col 1.26 the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, ***but now is made manifest***
- Eph 3.5 (*the mystery*) which in other ages was not made known... ***is now revealed*** unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit

What exactly, then, ***is*** the mystery, the eternal purpose and plan, which was revealed?

To better understand it, let us take a brief overview of the mysteries of Scripture.

New Testament References to the Mysteries

There are in all 27 New Testament references to often seemingly distinct specific mysteries or to mysteries in general. Here are some.

- Matt 13:11 the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven
- Mk 4.11; Lk 8.10 the mysteries of the kingdom of God
- 1 Cor 2.7 a mystery... which God ordained before the world unto our glory
- 1 Cor 15.51 I shew you a mystery, We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed
- Eph 1.9-10 the mystery of his will... that... He might gather together in one all things in Christ
- Eph 3.4; Col 4.3 the mystery of Christ
- Eph 5.32 this is a great mystery... concerning Christ and the church
- Eph 6.19 the mystery of the gospel
- Col 1.27 this mystery... which is Christ in you, the hope of glory
- 1 Tim 3.9 the mystery of the faith
- 1 Tim 3.16 great is the mystery of godliness
- Rev 1.20 the mystery of the seven stars... and the seven golden candlesticks
- Rev 10.7 the mystery of God

Though at first these may seem separate, distinct mysteries, closer examination shows that most are in fact interconnected with and different facets of the one single grand overall Mystery of God.

For example, we read of the mystery of the gospel (Eph 6.19) and of the mystery of the faith (1 Tim 3.9). But these two expressions speak only of the ***fact*** of a mystery at the heart of the faith and of the gospel. They throw no light upon the ***content*** or ***nature*** of that mystery.

We need to look at others of the mysteries to find this.

Two in particular.

The Two Key Components of the Mystery of God

The key/central mystery of the overall Mystery of God is “*the mystery of godliness*”, God manifest in flesh. This has two components.

- “*The mystery of Christ*”, God manifest in His Son; and,
- “*The mystery which is Christ in you*”, God manifest in His sons.

Before looking at these more closely, let us consider the supreme need of divine revelation.

The Need for the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation

To understand the Mystery of God and His eternal purpose, spiritual discernment and revelation are essential, for,

- 1 Cor 2.14-15 The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, ***because they are spiritually discerned***. But he that is spiritual judgeth (*Marg = discerneth*) all things

We need the same Anointing that was on the men of Issachar in the days of Saul and David, during a time of much confusion over what exactly was the mind of the God for Israel. They “*had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do*” (1 Chr 12.32).

Without the eyesalve of the Spirit, all that will be seen will be the ***outward*** events of history, not the mastermind plan at work ***behind*** those events. The Spirit of wisdom and revelation is needed.

This explains Paul’s prayers for his converts.

- Eph 1.17-18 that... God may give unto you ***the spirit of wisdom and revelation... the eyes of your understanding being enlightened***; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling
- Col 1.9 that ye might be ***filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding***

To know the hope of His calling means to know the hope to which we have been called.

By the knowledge of His will, Paul meant far more than merely to know whether it be God’s will to be a missionary, a housewife or a factory worker. He was referring to knowing “*the mystery of His will*” (Eph 1.9) and to seeing the riches of the glory of the Mystery of God and of His master plan for the Church.

In fact, it was only by revelation that Paul himself understood the mystery (Eph 3.3-4).

Let us now look more closely at what the Mystery of God is and in particular at the implications of its being finished in our Age.

The Mystery of Christ (God in the Flesh of His Son)

The Mystery of Christ

- What does the expression, “*the mystery of Christ*” (Eph 3.4; Col 4.3) mean?
- It does **not** mean the mystery that Christ **taught**.
- It means, rather, the mystery that Christ **is**. He Himself is the **content** of the mystery. He **is** the mystery.

In what way was Christ God’s mystery? Why is He so described? How is He its content?

The answer is found in one of the two great mysteries.

- 1 Tim 3.16 great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh.**

The essence of the mystery of godliness is **God in flesh**. And that is what Christ was. Let us illustrate by showing how Christ was,

- The house/tabernacle/temple of God; and
- The express image of God and the brightness of His glory.

God Was in Christ, the Habitation of God

From the beginning, God desired to dwell in a body of flesh.

The Old Testament tabernacle and temple foreshadowed that goal. They were not only where people went to worship and offer sacrifice, but also where God lived, i.e., His house.

But though the Lord did certainly dwell there in a special way, they could never satisfy His desire for a permanent residence. They were only temporary foreshadows.

Stephen explained clearly why neither could provide God with a permanent habitation.

- Acts 7.46-49 (David) desired to find a tabernacle for... God... But Solomon built him an house. Howbeit **the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands**; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: What house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? (Cp Isa 66.1-2; Acts 17.24).

What, then, **is** His house, the place of His rest? What is the final, permanent solution?

God’s lasting place of rest is a temple **of flesh**.

God fully and perfectly manifest in the flesh of His Son is the revelation of the heart of the Mystery of God, the very essence of His eternal purpose.

(This is why a test of an antichrist spirit is the confession that Christ is come **in the flesh**

- 1 Jn 4.2 Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come **in the flesh** is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come **in the flesh** is not of God...)

Through the miracle of the virgin birth, not only did all the fulness of the Godhead dwell in Christ, but, crucially, the body of Christ was a temple **of flesh**.

- Jn 1.14 the Word (*i.e.*, Christ) was **made flesh** (cp Heb 2.14)
- Col 2.9 in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead **bodily**.

In that body of flesh, He could fellowship with us. We could see and touch Him (1 Jn 1.1).

The body of Christ was thus the final habitation of God foreshadowed by the OT tabernacle.

- In John 1.14, the term “dwelt” (“the Word... **dwelt among us**”). means literally, “**tabernacled**”. In other words, the Word pitched His tent amongst us. And that tent was His body. God dwelling behind the OT tabernacle coverings of skin was a foreshadow of the day He would tabernacle behind the skin of the man Christ Jesus. Christ’s body was the reality foreshadowed by the tabernacle of Moses.

Christ’s body was also foreshadowed by the temple.

- In John 2.19-21, Jesus referred to “**the temple of His body**”. The word used refers to the inner sanctuary, not the outer precincts of the temple. In other words, Jesus’ body was the sanctuary of God, and a sanctuary was not merely a place to worship God, but also His dwelling-place. So, when Jesus called His body a temple, He was really saying that it was the dwelling-place of God.

In fact, the OT tabernacle/temple Holy of Holies, the dwelling place of God, foreshadowed Christ in great detail.

- **The veil** foreshadowed His flesh (Heb 10.20).
- Also behind the veil was **the mercy seat**, another shadow of Christ. (The word “propitiation” in Romans 3.25 AV properly means “**the place of propitiation**”, i.e., the mercy seat, as it is translated in Hebrews 9.5.)
- In the ark beneath the mercy seat lay **the golden pot of manna** (Heb 9.4). Christ was the **true** bread from heaven (Jn 6.31-33).
- Also under the mercy seat lay **the tables of the covenant**, the Mosaic Law (Heb 9.4). Christ had the law within Him (Ps 40.9).

To sum up, the very essence of the mystery of godliness is God manifest **in the flesh** of His Son. Christ’s **body** was the tabernacle and temple of God, His dwelling-place and the place of His rest.

Christ, the Express Image of God & the Brightness of His Glory

As well as being the habitation of God, Christ was also His image and glory.

- Heb 1.3 (his Son) being **the brightness of his glory** and **the express image of his person**

As we shall see, being the image and glory of God is very relevant to the plan of redemption.

1) Christ the Image of God

Christ was the exact image of God.

- 2 Cor 4.4 Christ... is **the image of God**

That image was not physical, for God is invisible. But in every detail of His character, He was the full, exact likeness of the personality of God.

- Col 1.15 (his dear Son) who is **the image of the invisible God** (The word translated “image” was used in legal documents in Bible days to describe the sum of a person’s distinctive features which distinguish him from all others. So, Jesus bears all the distinguishing marks of God.)
- Heb 1.3 (his Son) being... **the express image of his person** (The term “express image” refers to the impression made by a die or stamp used for making coins. Christ is thus the exact, precise likeness in every detail of the divine nature, bearing the stamp of the essential being of God.)

This is beautifully illustrated in John 1:18: “*No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son... he hath declared him.*”

- The word “*declared*” means literally, “brought forth, narrated fully, interpreted, translated, expounded, explained”.
- So, Jesus interpreted the Father by His life as well as by His words. He, as it were, translated the invisible God fully into a language we could understand.
- He not only revealed the Father by His **teaching** but by His **living**. He not just **gave** an explanation of God; He Himself **was** the explanation.

In any given situation, in every deed, word and thought, to see how Jesus reacted was to see how the Father would have reacted in the same circumstance.

- His deeds Jn 5.19, 30a; 14.31
- His judgement Jn 5.30b
- His doctrine Jn 7.16
- His words Jn 3.32-34; 8.38a; 12.49-50; 14.10, 24; 17.8a, 14a
- His will Jn 4.34; 6.38

Truly, then, to see Jesus in flesh was to see the invisible Father. He was the mirror image of God in every situation.

In other words, He was the express image of God.

No wonder, then, that Jesus could say,

- Jn 12.45 **he that seeth me seeth him that sent me**
- Jn 14.7,9 **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father**

2) Christ the Glory of God

As well as the image, Christ was the glory of God. When on earth, He was filled with that glory.

- Jn 1.14 the Word was made flesh... (and **we beheld his glory**, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father)...
- 2 Co 4.4 the glorious gospel of Christ (*literally, the gospel of the glory of Christ*)
- 2 Cor 4.6 God... hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of **the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ**.

Sometimes that glory was outwardly visible, as at the Transfiguration, when it literally shone out through the veil of His flesh and His clothing.

At others times it was seen in the wonderful works He did.

- Lk 13.17 all the people rejoiced for **all the glorious things** that were done by him.
- Jn 2.11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and **manifested forth his glory**
- Jn 11.40 Said I not... if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest **see the glory** of God?

In fact, Christ was **the Lord of glory** (1 Cor 2.8). The very OT Glory itself was veiled behind His flesh.

- Jas 2.1 our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Lord of glory**.

Very significantly, the words “*Lord of*” here are not in the original language. So, the verse actually says Jesus Christ was literally “the Glory”.

Exactly!

This is indeed the mystery of Christ. The mystery of Christ is Christ as the full revelation of all of God **in flesh**.

But it does not end there. That was only the beginning.

The Mystery which is Christ in You (God in the Flesh of His Sons)

God's eternal purpose did not end with Him being fully manifested in the flesh of His Son, the Man Christ Jesus. Even when God had a Man who fully expressed Him in flesh, His eternal purpose was not yet **fully** realised. The mystery/purpose of God was not yet finished.

The Eternal Purpose: Both Realised and to be Realised

Let us explain by looking at two apparently contradictory references to the fulfilling of the mystery/plan/purpose of God.

- In **Ephesians 3.11**, Paul speaks of “*the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus*”. The word “purposed” implies God’s purpose was realised, accomplished and carried into effect in Christ. And indeed, it was. In fact, Christ was Himself its fulfilment. So, it seems the Mystery of God has been completed/finished.
- Yet, in **Revelation 10.7**, written years after the death of Paul, the completion of the Mystery of God is stated to be still future.

So, has the Mystery of God, His eternal purpose, been fulfilled or not? How do we reconcile this **future** finishing of the Mystery of God with the **past** accomplishing of God’s eternal purpose?

Quite easily.

The answer lies in the 2-stage fulfilment of the mystery of godliness, the key/central mystery of the overall Mystery of God. As we have seen, its essence is that “**God was manifest in the flesh**”. But although fulfilled **in the past** in and by Christ, it did not end there. There is a further **future** fulfilment.

The Mystery of God manifest in flesh is not limited to His being manifested in the flesh of His Son.

- **Just as** in **Christ** dwelt, “*all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*” (Col 2.9),
- **So**, Paul prayed for **the Church likewise** to be filled **in her flesh** “*with all the fulness of God*” (Eph 3.19).

How?

- **Just as** all the fulness of God was poured into **the physical body** of Christ (Col 2.9), so that He was the image and glory of God;
- **So**, all the fulness of Christ was to be poured into **His spiritual body**, the Church (Eph 1.23), so that she should be the image and glory of Christ.

As explained, the essence of the Mystery of God and of His eternal purpose is “*the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh*”.

- **The “mystery of Christ”**, God fully manifest **in the flesh of His Son**, was not the final fulfilling/finishing of the mystery of godliness. It was only the first stage.
- The second stage is, “**the mystery which is Christ in you**” (Col 1.27), i.e., God, through Christ, fully manifest **in the flesh of His redeemed sons**.

Only then will the Mystery of God be completely finished.

Let us now see how the mystery is progressively reproduced in the flesh of His redeemed sons.

Christ, the Beginning of the New Creation

God in Christ was not an end in itself. Through Christ in us, God planned to replicate what He did in Christ so as to make man also the image and glory of God, thus restoring what He lost at the Fall. The Mystery of God is thus effectively the plan of redemption.

The first man, Adam, was originally the image and glory of God (1 Cor 11.7) in a body of flesh. But when he fell, he lost his original inheritance.

God then sent a second Man, a new Man, the Man Christ Jesus (1 Tim 2.5). He also was the image and glory of God (Heb 1.3) in a body of flesh.

That Man was not only ***the climax and end*** of God's eternal purpose, completely fulfilling His plan to express Himself in flesh. He was also ***the first, the beginning***, of a new creation; a second Man, to restore the first, fallen man to His original design.

- 1 Cor 15.47 ***the second man*** is the Lord from heaven.
- Col 1.15 (his dear Son) Who is ***the firstborn of every creature*** (*literally, "of all creation", i.e., of the new creation, not the original one.*)

So, "*the mystery of Christ*" was only the first phase of the divine plan. Christ was then to be the firstborn and beginning of a new creation made like Himself, according to God's original design.

- Rev 3.14 These things saith... ***the beginning of the creation of God.***

This new creation was to be characterised by "*Christ in you*", i.e., by Christ incarnate in His Church just as God was incarnate in Christ. Not now God in the flesh of just one Man, Christ (2 Cor 5.19), God but God in a whole new creation.

Although Christ completely, perfectly and fully manifested God's mystery/plan in a body of flesh, He was but its ***starting point***. He was both the ***completion*** of God's mystery, and also its ***commencement***; both its ***end*** and its ***beginning***.

Let us look more closely at the second phase/stage of the mystery, the new creation. It is the gateway to an understanding of the full meaning of redemption and of God's plan to restore to man His original design.

The New Man

The second Man, the new Man, the Man Christ Jesus, was God's pattern to restore the image and glory which Adam lost at the Fall.

1) Renewed After the Image of Christ

Christ was to be the firstborn of a new creation conformed to His image.

- Ro 8.29 (them) he... did predestinate to be ***conformed to the image of his Son***
- 1 Cor 15.49 as we have borne the image of the earthly (*i.e., the man of earth/dust, Adam*), ***we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*** (*i.e., the Man of heaven*)

That changing/renewing into His image has been a work in progress throughout the Church Ages.

- Col 3.10 And have put on the new man, which is (*literally, being*) ***renewed*** in knowledge ***after the image of him that created him***
- 2 Cor 3.18 we all... beholding in a glass (*NKJV, mirror*) the glory of the Lord, are changed (*literally, being* changed, transformed) ***into the same image...***

2) Changed from Glory to Glory

To regain his original inheritance, man had not only to be renewed after the image of God, but also to be changed into His glory.

This is stated clearly in the latter part of the last verse just quoted. It speaks of being progressively changed into His glory, as well as into His image.

- 2 Cor 3.18 we all...**beholding** in a glass **the glory of the Lord**, are changed into the same image **from glory to glory...**

Being changed from glory to glory is the very heart and ultimate purpose of God's plan of redemption. The fulfilling of the Mystery of God is directly linked to our glorification.

The fact that the restoration of man's lost glory is fundamental God's divine plan is seen in Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1.17-18a.

- Very significantly, the prayer was addressed to the Father **of glory**.
- For what? For, "*the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him*", i.e., for a full knowledge of the mystery of Christ as the fulness of God manifest in flesh.
- Why did he pray for that? So that the eyes of our understanding would be flooded with light.
- Enlightenment about what? To know the hope of our calling.
- Why? Because the revelation of Who Christ is results in a revelation of the hope to which we have been called. Christ Himself **is** the revelation of the hope to which we have been called! He not only **gives** us hope; He Himself **embodies** that hope (1 Tim 1.1).
- And what is that hope? The hope of the restoration of the lost glory.

No wonder Paul said we rejoice in such a hope (Ro 5.2). It is the hope of the very glory of God Himself!

(The same theme of the ultimate goal of the Mystery of God being to restore our lost glory is found in another verse.

- 1 Cor 2.7 we speak the wisdom of God in **a mystery**, even the hidden wisdom... **ordained** before the world **unto our glory**.)

How? The Mystery Which is Christ in You

How was this new creation to be brought about? How is that lost glory to be restored? By the mystery of Christ in you.

- Col 1.26-27 the mystery which... now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery... which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**

The ultimate goal of Christ being poured into the Church is the restoration of man's lost glory.

"*Christ in you*" is God's plan to restore man's lost glory. God fully manifest **in the flesh of Christ** was but the first stage of the mystery of godliness. The second stage was Christ in us, God fully manifest **in our flesh**. That is the key to the unveiling of, and the experiencing of, the hope to which we have been called.

God would then be manifest in the flesh not now of just one Man, but of the whole body of true believers worldwide, across all Ages.

Christ would thus be,

- **The first** of a new creation, a creation characterised by "*Christ in you*".
- "**The firstborn among many brethren**" (Ro 8.29), walking **in** His people (2 Cor 6.16).

To put it differently,

- **Not now**, God in Christ; God manifest **in His Son**, the firstborn of a new creation;
- **But**, Christ in you; God manifest **in His sons**, His new creation.

Let us now look at some detailed illustrations of the mystery of Christ in us, reproduced in the flesh of His Church even now, before the day we shall appear with Him in glory (Col 3.4).

Christ Liveth in Me

Among the mysteries of Scripture, two are explicitly called great. One was the mystery of godliness. Here is the second one,

- Eph 5.30-32 we are members of His body, and of His flesh and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh: ***This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.***

The first of the great mysteries (1 Tim 3.16) focusses on God manifesting Himself in flesh; the second on the awe-inspiring oneness between Christ and His Church.

- She not only seeks to do Christ's will in all things. She is actually part of Him.
- Just as Eve was part of Adam, though separate from him (Gen 2.22-23), so it is with Christ and the Church. (Cp Gen 5.2, "*Male and female created he them... and called their name Adam...*")

Little wonder Paul called this a **great** mystery.

Throughout the Church Ages, God has been working towards a full and final finishing of the Mystery of God in the flesh of His people. Through Christ in us, He is reproduced in us.

- Col 1:27 to whom (= *His saints*) God would make known... this mystery... which is ***Christ in you***
- Gal 4.19 I travail in birth again until ***Christ be formed in you***
- 2 Cor 4.10-11 ***that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal flesh***

What is the ultimate goal?

- Gal 2.20 I live, yet not I, but ***Christ liveth in me***, and the life which I now live ***in the flesh*** I live by the faith of the Son of God

Let us consider some detailed examples of the life of Christ made manifest in us.

1) The Spirit of Christ

The unity between Christ and the believer even reaches the level of the spirit. It is not just that our human spirit has common ground with His Spirit. We **have** the very Spirit of Christ.

- Ro 8.9 if any man **have** not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His
- Phil 1.19 I know that this shall turn to my salvation through the supply of the Spirit **of** Christ. (*Not simply the supply provided by the Spirit of Christ; the supply is the Spirit of Christ.*)

2) The Mind of Christ

A natural consequence of the foregoing is to be of one mind.

- 1 Cor 2:16 we have the mind of Christ.

This is far more than **knowing** Christ's thoughts. It is to **share** them, to love what He loves, to hate what He hates, and to desire what He desires. Jesus knew the thoughts of His critics. But He most certainly did not share them!

3) The Word of Christ

There were times when Paul's mind and spirit were so closely united to those of Christ that when he spoke, he could say it was actually Christ speaking in him (cp Mt 10.20).

- 2 Cor 13.3 ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me

This is far more than simply quoting the words of Christ. It is also more than Christ's

putting words into Paul's mouth. The Lord spoke through a dumb ass (2 P 2.6), and through unbelieving Caiaphas (Jn 11.51). But in neither case was He joined to them in Spirit They were not of one mind, even though they spoke by the Spirit.

4) The Love of Christ

Jesus said we are to love one another, "**as I have loved you**" (Jn 15.12).

This is not simply to copy His love. It is to actually possess the self-same love that Christ has. This is why Paul wrote,

- 2 Cor 5.14 the love of Christ constraineth us.

It was not love **for** Christ that constrained Paul, but the very love **of** Christ. Paul and Christ had become one. Paul's love was Christ's love.

5) The Bowels of Christ

So also with our bowels of compassion. Paul's bowels became Christ's bowels. He was so joined to Christ that he felt towards others as did Christ.

- Phil 1.8 I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

This is far more than having compassion **given by** Christ. It was the very compassion **of** Christ. This is the very essence of the mystery of godliness, God has not merely given us all He **has**, He has given us all He **is**.

6) The Sufferings of Christ

At times believers must suffer **for** Christ (cp Acts 9.16; Phil 1.29). But the union between He and the believer is deeper than this. We not only suffer **for Him**.

As He suffers with His people in their sufferings, we also suffer **with Him**.

- Col 1.24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind (*i.e., lacking*) of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake

Christ's sufferings for His Church are not complete. (Not those for our redemption, of course). Paul shared in his own body the very sufferings still being endured by Christ.

This is why Paul spoke of, "*the fellowship of His sufferings*" (Phil 3.10). He did not mean a re-living of our Lord's past sufferings at Calvary, nor that he wanted to **understand** Christ's sufferings better. He wanted to **share** them, not simply by suffering for his faith as Jesus did **in the past**, but by sharing with Christ in His **present** sufferings.

Peter spoke of the same thing, "*rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings*" (1 P 4.13). Doubtless we do go through similar experiences to those which Christ suffered in His earthly ministry. But we also partake with Him now in what He suffers in the present for and with His people (cp Ro 8.17).

This is why Jesus said to Saul on the Damascus road, "*why persecutest thou Me?*" (Acts 9.4). Saul never met Christ in the flesh. But when persecuting the Church, he was persecuting Christ.

What a depth of fellowship! Christ suffers with us; we suffer with Christ. Truly, "*he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit*" (1 Cor 6.17).

7) The Life of Christ

It is possible to itemise even more aspects of our lives, showing how each can be a manifestation of the very nature of Christ. Here are a few more examples

- Our **joy** is not just a joy that He gives. God gives all men joy through His natural provision (Acts 14:17b). But the joy we have is Christ's own joy (Jn 15.11; 17.13). What causes Him joy causes us joy. Our interests are one.
- Likewise, our **peace** is not just given **by** Him; it is Christ's own peace (Jn 14.27).
- The **meekness and gentleness** Paul experienced were not his own. They were those of Christ (2 Cor 10.1).
- The **faith** he lived by was the very faith of Christ Himself (Gal 2.20; cp Gal 2.16 KJV).

In fact, every facet of our life can be an incarnation of Christ. He not only **gives** us life; Christ **is** our life. He not only gave His life **for** us; He gave His life **to** us.

- Gal 2.20 I live yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.
- Phil 1.21 to me to live is Christ (*NB not to live for Christ. For Paul, to live was Christ. His life was a revelation of Christ.*)
- Col 3.4 Christ who is our life
- 2 Tim 1.1 the promise of life which is **in** Christ Jesus. (*This is far more than simply the promise of eternal life. It speaks of the nature of that life. Not simply life from Christ. God gives life to all creation (Acts 17.25), but to the believer He gives the very life of Christ.*)

Truly, as Paul said, “*we are made partakers of Christ*” (Heb 3.14). This is far more than being His partners and partakers of all He gives us. It is **Himself** that we partake of.

This gives an even deeper significance to verses such as,

- Ro 13.14 **put ye on** the Lord Jesus Christ
- Gal 3.27 as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have **put on** Christ.

To put on Christ means precisely that. It does not mean to **copy** Him, but to **become** Him.

What an astonishing unity!

To sum up

It should now be quite clear how closely the “*great mystery... concerning Christ and the Church*” is bound up with the other great mystery, “*the mystery of godliness*”.

- Just as Christ was the express image of God, so the Church is to be conformed to the image of Christ.
- Just as Christ was the incarnation, the visible expression in flesh, of the invisible God, so the Church is to be the incarnation and visible revelation of Christ.

Great indeed is the mystery of godliness.

Let us now look at the glorious finishing of the Mystery of God.

The Mystery at Work Through the Church Ages

The Mystery of the Seven Stars and the Seven Golden Candlesticks

One of the mysteries listed earlier was Revelation 1.20, the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks.

This mystery is a prophetic unveiling of the battle throughout the Church Ages to finish the Mystery of God.

The revelation of the Mystery of God was lost very early on in Church history, but then progressively recovered.

- ***Firstly, the progressive downwards slide*** from her first wonderful beginning over the first four Ages, via the doctrines of the Nicolaitans, of Balaam and of Jezebel, culminating in the awful depths of satan (Rev 2.24).
- ***Then, the progressive restoration*** over the last three Ages to God's original intention as first revealed at the beginning of the first Age.

When shall that restoration come to its conclusion? When shall the Mystery of God be finished?

When Shall the Mystery of God Be Finished?

The Mystery of God, His eternal purpose, has been at work all through history. Though hidden in the OT, in retrospect it can be discerned in its many types and shadows.

When later revealed to the NT apostles and prophets, there were two major phases of the mystery of godliness, the main constituent of the Mystery of God.

- ***The mystery of Christ***, God fully manifest in the flesh of ***His Son***.
- ***The mystery of Christ in you***, God, through the indwelling Christ, fully manifest in the flesh of ***His sons***.

As explained earlier, though in one sense God's purpose was completed in Christ, in another it was yet to be finished. It has both ***been*** fulfilled and is ***yet to be*** fulfilled.

As revealed in the mystery of the seven stars and the seven candlesticks, the battle to finish the mystery has been intense. But the final outcome is certain. Long before the time, the Bible predicted clearly the fact of, and the time when, the Mystery would come to its final finishing.

- Rev 10.7 ***in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall begin to sound***, the mystery of God should be finished

Who is that seventh angel?

- It cannot be the seventh of the seven angels given trumpets to sound in Revelation 8.2, for the sixth sounds in Revelation 9.12, and the seventh in Revelation 11.15.
- It must, therefore, be the seventh of the seven angels/messengers to the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3, the angel to the church of the Laodiceans.

So, the mystery/plan of God will be finished/fulfilled at the sounding of the messenger to our final Laodicea Church Age.

And not only the ***revelation*** of the mystery, but also the ***experience*** of it.

The Finishing of the New Creation

The finishing of the Mystery of God in this final Age fits in well with one of the titles of Christ in His message to Laodicea.

- Rev 3.14 These things saith... ***the beginning of the creation of God*** (*The word translated “beginning” means “beginner” as well as “beginning”. The creation referred to is the **new** creation, not the original one.*)

Why is this title found here?

Because Laodicea is the Age in which He Who began that new creation will also finish it.

That new creation is His Church. In Christ, we are the new creation.

- Eph 2.10 we are his workmanship, ***created in Christ Jesus***
- 2 Cor 5.17 ***if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*** (NKJ = *creation*)

And despite all hell's opposition throughout the Ages, what the Lord has begun, He will complete.

- Ps 138.8 ***The Lord will perfect*** that which concerneth me
- Phil 1.6 Being confident of this very thing, that ***he which hath begun a good work in you will perform*** (= perfect) ***it*** until the day of Jesus Christ
- Heb 12.2 Jesus the Author (= Beginner) ***and Finisher*** (= Perfecter) of our faith

The Progressive Recovery of His Image from Glory to Glory

We have seen earlier how the Mystery of God is effectively His plan of redemption, and that central to that plan is the full restoration of the image and glory of God man lost at the Fall.

Throughout the Church Ages, through “***the mystery of Christ in you***”, God has been working to fully and finally complete His eternal purpose. His plan to restore God-likeness to man is concisely summed up in one verse.

- 2 Cor 3.18 we all... beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, ***are changed into the same image from glory to glory***, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Notice the two fundamental aspects,

- ***Firstly***, being ***progressively changed back into His image***, the ultimate goal of which is to bear the image of the Man of heaven (1 Cor 15.49).
- ***Secondly***, being ***progressively changed from glory into glory***, i.e., the inworking of “***the mystery which is Christ in you, the hope of glory***” (Col 1.27).

That changing is achieved by the renewing of the Holy Ghost (Ti 3.5). Throughout the Church Ages, the Spirit has been progressively transforming/renewing the Church with the ultimate goal of restoring the original image and glory of God.

1) Changed into His Image: The Restored Image of God

The image of Christ has been progressively formed in the true believer.

- Gal 4.19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again ***until Christ be formed in you***.
- Col 3.10 the new man, which is (*literally = is being*) ***renewed... after the image of him*** that created him

The final outcome is both sure and foreordained.

- Ro 8.29 whom he did foreknow, he also did ***predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son***

The transforming/renewing process will come to its conclusion, the restoration of the lost image of God, at the end of this final Church Age.

Or, as Bro Branham put it,

- "... let the living Word dwell in us and abide in us, ***that we might... be transformed*** by the renewing of our spirit, ***into the form of the Son of God."*** **59-0628M - A Deceived Church, By The World, par 2**

2) Changed from Glory to Glory: The Restored Glory of God

As well as the restoration of the lost image, the restoration of man's lost glory is at the heart of the Mystery of God.

- 1 Cor 2.7 ***a mystery...*** which God ordained (= *predestined*) before the world ***unto our glory***

As explained earlier, the means of attaining that glory is summed up in another mystery.

- Col 1.27 ***this mystery...*** which is ***Christ in you, the hope of glory***

Just as our conformity to the divine image, so also our glorification is both sure and predetermined.

- Ro 8.29-30 whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son... Moreover, ***whom he did predestinate***, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, ***them he also glorified.***

Like the changing into God's image, so also our glorification has been a work in progress throughout the Church Ages. But in this Age the progressive recovery of the original lost glory comes to its final conclusion, the full redemption of the original glory.

In other words, to the time when the Mystery of God is finished.

Bro Branham explains the implications.

- Paul said here, "Changing from Glory to Glory". You see, ***finally, It comes till It's back to Its original Glory...*** Well, that's exactly what the Church has done. It come from Luther, Wesley, and now... ***back to Its original Glory, back to the Glory It was at the beginning...*** changing from Glory to Glory. It changed from the pagan, down into Luther; and from Luther, down into Wesley; from Wesley, out into Pentecost; and on and on, ***changing from Glory to Glory... And now It's ripe, to bring Him back exactly like He was at the beginning, His same ministry; the same Jesus, the same power, the same Holy Ghost.*** The same One that come down on the Day of Pentecost, is the same Holy Ghost that's manifested today, from Glory unto Glory, to Glory. ***And is back to Its original Seed,*** with the baptism of the Holy Ghost; with the same signs, same wonders, same baptism; same kind of people, acting the same way, with the same power, the same sensation... ***"The Mighty God Unveiled Before Us" (64-0629), par 156-159***

Let us now look at the final stage of the changing/renewing of the Holy Ghost and the glorious implications of the finishing of the Mystery of God.

The Grand Finale: The Finishing of the Mystery of God

The ultimate goal of God's grand purpose in the Mystery of God is the full restoration of God's original purpose for man, the image and glory of God.

The whole creation is eagerly awaiting the manifestation/unveiling of the sons of God in their redeemed bodies of glory.

When that happens, it may truly then be said that the Mystery of God is finished.

So, let us conclude by looking at,

- The perfecting of the spiritual body of Christ, and its becoming the fulness of Christ and part of Christ.
- The grand climax, the believer's redeemed, changed, glorified, physical body.

The New Man: The Body of Christ Comes to a Perfect Man

The Church is the body of Christ.

- 1 Cor 12.12,27 as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ... ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Throughout the Church Ages, that body has been progressively growing to full maturity, to full stature.

- Eph 4.16 *the whole body... maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love*
- Col 2.19 the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, *increaseth with the increase of God*

This edifying/maturing comes to its glorious conclusion in this final Laodicea Church Age.

What is that final conclusion?

- Eph 4.12-14 for the edifying of the body of Christ: *till we all come... unto a perfect man... that we be henceforth no more children...*

And what is a perfect man?

- Eph 4.13-16 till we all come... unto a perfect man, *unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ... that we... may grow up into him in all things*, which is the Head, even Christ

In other words, the final result is nothing less than the very fulness of Christ Himself!

Let us look at this more closely.

1) A Perfect Man is the Fulness of Christ

It is not just that Christ is all and in all in this new man. That corporate new man is all of Christ!

As explained previously, the mystery of godliness is not just God ***in the flesh of Christ***. It is God ***in flesh***.

- **Firstly**, all the fulness of ***God was poured into*** the physical body of ***Christ***, fully expressing Himself in the flesh of His Son.
 - Col 1.19 it pleased the Father that ***in him should all fulness dwell***
 - Col 2.9 ***in him dwelleth all the fulness*** of the Godhead bodily

- **Then**, all the fulness of **Christ was poured into** the spiritual body of Christ, **the Church**, to fully express Himself in the flesh of His Church. Not just all He **has**, but all He **is**.
 - Jn 1.16 **of his (i.e., Christ's) fulness have we all received**
 - Eph 1.23 (the church) **which is his body, the fulness of him (i.e., Christ)** that filleth all in all.

And if filled with all the fulness of Christ, then she is filled with all the fulness of God.

- Eph 3.14-19 I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... that he would grant you... that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith... **that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.**

So, just as in Christ God had a Man in whom He had total pre-eminence, so also in the new creation, the new man, Christ likewise has total pre-eminence.

- Col 1.18 he is the head of the... church... **that in all things he might have the preeminence**

No wonder Paul prayed for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to flood the eyes of our hearts with light that we might come to understand the greatness of the mighty power at work within us, the self-same power that raised Christ from the dead (Eph 3.15-20)!

Truly, as he said,

- Eph 3.20-21 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Amen and amen!

But there is more.

2) A Perfect Man is Part of Christ

At the time when the Mystery of God comes to its glorious finishing, as Bro Branham said, Christ, the Head, will become one with His body in works and in life.

- Christ, **the true Headship coming in His Bride, doing the same works that He did at the beginning** (Jn 14.12). **The Head and the Body are becoming one in works and in sign and in Life**, vindicated by God Himself through His promised Word of the last days. **He promised this in the last days... It's God manifested in His people... God and His Church is One. Christ in you, God's great revelation... "Christ Is The Mystery Of God Revealed" (63-0728), p 83-85**

In other words, to come to a perfect man is to come to a perfect union with Christ.

The extent of that union is truly astonishing.

The End Time Church/bride is **not just filled with** Christ's fulness. She is no longer a separate being **but actually part of** Him, just as the first bride, Eve, was part of Adam.

- Gen 2.21-23 the Lord God... took one of his ribs... and the rib... made he a Woman... And Adam said, **This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh...** because she was taken out of Man.

She is part of the very body of Christ. No wonder then that, along with the mystery of godliness, this is one of the two mysteries described as great.

- Eph 5.28-32 So ought men to love their wives **as their own bodies**. He that loveth

his wife loveth **himself**. No man ever yet hateth **his own flesh**...For **we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones**... **This is a great mystery**, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

As Bro Branham says, at the end of the Laodicea Age, when the Mystery of God is finished, Christ and His Bride will actually unite, the bride becoming part of the Groom and thus part of the Word.

- This uniting time, to see churches uniting, nations uniting. **It's a uniting time of God and His Bride**, too. **"What Shall I Do With Jesus"** (63-1124M), par 115
- **the bride must be identified with Him and in Him, because it is part of Him**. Now, **the bride is part of Him**. The Word for that day, **the bride becomes part of that Word, for it's Christ**... **We have to be in Christ. In Christ, we have to be of Christ, in Christ, part of Christ**. What is a woman? When a man takes a woman, that woman has to be part of him. **They're no longer two; they're one**... And **when the Church becomes Christ's bride, she and the Gospels are the same**. **"Identified Masterpiece of God"** (64-1205), par 68

Unspeakable!

The Grand Climax: A Redeemed, Changed Body

The final stage of our being changed from glory to glory is the body change, the redemption of the body.

1) The Mystery of the Body Change

The body change is another of the mysteries clustered around the one overall Mystery of God.

- 1 Cor 15.51-52 Behold, I shew you **a mystery**; We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**... the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and **we shall be changed**.

Why is this change needed? To be able to be caught up to meet the Bridegroom in the air in the rapture.

It is the unveiling of the Mystery of God by the Laodicea messenger that prepares the Church for that change, making her ready for the rapture.

- at the end of the Pentecostal age, we are supposed to receive... a messenger that will take all those loose ends out there and reveal the whole secret of God, **for the rapturing of the Church.** **63-0318 - The First Seal, par 74**

Referring to the grand climax of the transformation/renewing/glorification process, when we are changed from mortal to immortal, into a body like His, Bro Branham said,

- **She'll be made from mortal to immortality; be changed in a moment**, in a twinkling of an eye... **We're entering another age; we're entering the raptured age... the move is on for the Bride. That's the Truth. That's THUS SAITH THE LORD.** **65-1125 - "Invisible Union Of The Bride", p 46+55, par 325+379**
- **And the next will be, "Changed from this Glory, into a body like His Own glorious body, where we shall see Him."** Abraham saw the same... **64-0629 - The Mighty God Unveiled Before Us, par 159**

The reference to Abraham in the context of a changed body is very significant.

Why? Because it reminds how he and his wife were prepared and their faith quickened to enable them to receive their promised son, just as the End Time believer, Abraham's spiritual seed, is today being prepared for the coming of the Promised Son, Christ.

2) The Body Change Typed in Abraham and Sarah

The faith of Abraham and Sarah was sorely tried over the divine promise of a son made to Abraham when he was 75 (Gen 12.7).

- After 10 years, still with no child, Sarah's faith in her own ability weakened and she prevailed upon Abraham to go into her maid, to conceive by her (Gen 16.1-3).
- The Lord appeared to Abraham 14 years later, he now being 99 and Sarah 89, and again promised him a son, by Sarah. He laughed and questioned in his heart how at their age this could be, but when the Lord repeated the promise (Gen 17.1,15-21) Abraham believed Him (Ro 4.18-21).
- Very soon after the Lord appeared again to Abraham, repeating the promise. Sarah overheard but laughed inwardly. She had obviously not believed the earlier repetition of the promise, even though she must have known about the visitation. When the Lord asked why she laughed, she denied. But He insisted, and asked if anything was too hard for Him (Gen 18.9-15).
- Although rebuked and corrected, the Lord's words did not condemn Sarah. Instead, they imparted the confidence and faith to believe the promise (cp 1 Jn 3.21). So, just like her husband, she now also, by faith, received strength to conceive (Heb 11.11).

What was the result of their response to the divine visitation? A body change in both.

How do we know?

- Very soon after the promise, after the destruction of Sodom, Abraham and Sarah moved to the Philistine city of Gerar. The ruler took Sarah for himself (Gen 20.1-2).
- Why? What was the attraction in an 89-year-old woman, whose womb was dead (Ro 4.19), no longer able to bear (Gen 18.11-12), and unable to give suck? Because she had been changed back to a young woman, able once more to give suck (Gen 21.7)!
- So also with Abraham. Though his own body was now dead (Ro 4.19), he too was rejuvenated and able to beget the promised son. Furthermore, after Sarah's death, 37 years later, he remarried, and begat a further six sons (Gen 25.1-3), living until 175.

How is this relevant to the End Time Church?

Because it is a foreshadow of our day.

Just before the coming of Christ, as with Sarah, the faith of His bride shall be quickened so as to experience a body change to fit her for the receiving of the Promised Son and the rapture. Before the promised son could come to Sarah and Abraham, their bodies had to be changed, not just back to youth from age but from barren to fertile. We likewise cannot receive the Promised Son in our present physical bodies, not even if resurrected. We will need faith for a changed body able to meet Him in the air.

Bro Branham spoke of the coming of such faith.

- ***we've got to have rapturing faith in a Church that can be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye to go out***, or we'll not go. ***But don't worry, it'll be there. It'll be there***. And when the power of this church rises, it'll bring its brethren... the power of that church will bring the other brethren (Heb 11.39-40); then there'll be a general resurrection. ***(59-1219 - Questions And Answers On The Holy Ghost, par 21)***
- When a man lives by faith and walks by faith, he... becomes a new creature in Christ. There now you're getting into Bride material... ***into rapturing condition***... Now ***you're coming to perfect faith, perfect perfection*** that cannot fail. That faith never fails... He's here, does this ***to create a perfect faith***. I feel him... And I know... He's been doing

something to create **this perfection of faith** in the people...

I'm working out something... to... raise faith in a bracket where you've never noticed it that way before. **Not a faith but a perfect faith... We're coming now to the perfection**, because **the people has to come to this in order for the rapture**. That's what's holding it away right now, is **waiting for that Church to come into that perfect raptured faith...** It means a lot of shaving down for me, it means a lot for you, but together we'll make it by the grace of God. Amen. (**"Perfect Faith", 63-0825E, par 157,213**)

3) The Revelation/Manifestation of the Power & the Glory Already Within

On the mount of transfiguration, the disciples had **a foreview** of the glory to be revealed in Jesus, Moses and Elijah. From Pentecost on, through the Spirit, they had **a foretaste** of that glory.

During the Church Ages, true believers have experienced in measure the knowledge of the glory of God, even though hidden in vessels of clay.

- 2 Cor 4.6-7 God...hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. **But** we have this treasure in earthen vessels

In their trials they tasted the Spirit of glory.

- 1 P 1.6-8 Wherein (i.e., *in a salvation to be revealed in the last time*) ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations... **with joy unspeakable and full of glory** (*literally = glorified*)
- 1 P 4.14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for **the spirit of glory** and of God **resteth upon you**

But there is more. The powers of our future full transformation are not only to be **tasted**. They are **already within** us.

In this final Church Age, as Bro Branham said, the bride will come to a full realisation of what is already within and of who she is. Then she will be transformed, changed back to the original glory.

- **Transform these people** tonight, Father, we pray. All that You called You said You justified, **and all You justified, You glorified** (Ro 8.30). **60-0608 – Having Conferences, par 93**
- Oh, if the Church only knew its position! It will, one day. Then, **the Rapture will go when it knows what it is.** **63-0728 - Christ Is The Mystery Of God Revealed, par 240**

It will be as with the disciples in the storm on the sea (Mt 8.23-27; Mk 4.335-41; Lk 8.22-25).

- Through the Church Ages, believers have sought to reach the goal Christ set for them.
- But they have had to battle against a great storm, threatening to sink the boat, and putting their lives in jeopardy.
- Then, amidst all their struggles to fulfil the Master's will, at the End Time, believers will become aware that He Who has all power over every hindrance has been in the boat with them all the time, just waiting for them to recognise His presence and to call Him on the scene. Then every opposition will be overcome and the divine goal reached.

When that revelation comes, End Time believers will realise what has been at work within them all the time, the very thing that Paul prayed for for his Ephesian converts.

- Eph 1.17-20 That... God... may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation... the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; **that ye may know... what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward... according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead**

Bro Branham referred to this same passage when speaking of the final stage of our being changed from glory to glory, and being transformed back to our original (lost) glory.

- "... Cease not to give thanks to you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation...knowledge of him... (Eph 1.16-17)" Just keep revealing Himself to you all the time, ***growing from grace unto grace, from power unto power, glory unto glory.*** Not fall back; and, but ***from glory unto glory, keep moving on.*** **60-0522E – Adoption #4, par 181**

And the power Paul prayed for was not only at work ***toward*** them. It was also ***within*** them.

- Eph 3.20-21 unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, ***according to the power that worketh in us,*** unto him be glory...

What is the that power working toward?

The Spirit is in the Word; so, if the seed of the Word abides in us, we are progressively transformed by the Spirit into the likeness of the Word and thus of Christ, Who is the Word, back to the original seed planted at Pentecost.

- And now, speaking this morning on the thought of the Church growing, see, coming like a Seed in the ground. And that Seed, as it's planted, ***grows from glory unto glory.*** And it becomes, after while, into a blossom, ***and then goes back to the seed. That's like the original Seed that was planted. And so has the Church been...***

64-0418E – Jesus Keeps All His Appointments, par 6

4) A Body Like unto the Body of His Glory

When the revelation comes of the power at work within and its purpose, the restoration to the image and glory of God will come to a climax. The Mystery of God will be finished. The glory already within will be openly revealed and manifested.

John said, when Christ appears we shall be like Him (1 Jn 3.2).

Like Him in what way?

Our bodies must be changed ready for the rapture to meet Him in the air. Like Him, we too shall appear in glory. The glory within will be manifested externally.

- Col 3.4 When Christ... shall appear, ***then shall ye also appear with him in glory.***
- Ro 8.17-18 if so be that we suffer with him, ***that we may be also glorified together (i.e., with Him).*** For... the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with ***the glory which shall be revealed in us.***

As Bro Branham said, when the Mystery of God is finished, the glory will shine from us.

- "The mystery of God is already accomplished." ***What is it, "The mystery of God"?*** ***"God in you, the hope of Glory," shining forth*** **55-0109E - Beginning And Ending Of The Gentile Dispensation, par 146**

Furthermore, that glory will not only be ***from*** Him, but ***of*** Him.

The heavenly bodies have a glory which God gave them (1 Cor 15.40-41). But, though it is ***from*** Him, it is not ***of*** Him. It is not His very own glory.

But our glory will not merely be from Him. It will be Christ's very own glory. Our redeemed bodies

shall be glorified just like His.

- 1 Cor 15.49 as we have borne the image of the earthly (= the man of earth, Adam), **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly** (= the Man of heaven, Christ)
- Phil 3.21 (Christ) shall change our vile body, **that it may be fashioned like unto** his glorious body (*literally, the body of his glory*)

Paul spoke of this revelation/manifestation when our bodies are redeemed.

- Ro 8.18-23 **the glory... shall be revealed in us.** For the earnest expectation of the creature (= *creation*) waiteth for **the manifestation of the sons of God...** because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty (*literally = the liberty of the glory*) of **the children of God.** For... the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also... even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, **the redemption of our body.**

This explains why Paul said that, at His coming, Christ will not only be glorified **by** his saints, but **in** his saints.

- 2 Th 1.10 he shall come **to be glorified in his saints**, and to be admired in all them that believe... in that day

It is **His** glory that will be seen in them. They will not just appear with him in glory; they will appear in **His** glory. Their glory will be **His** glory. So, when others wonder at the glory of the saints, it is Christ's own glory in them that they will marvel at.

This same awesome truth of our glory being the very glory of God is found elsewhere.

- Jn 17.22 **the glory which thou gavest me** I have given them
- 2 Th 2.14 called... to **the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

And this is exactly how John, saw the bride descending out of heaven.

- Rev 21.9,11 I will shew thee the bride... And he carried me away in the spirit... and shewed me that great city... descending out of heaven... **having the glory of God**

Her glory will be the very glory of God Himself.

Truly, she is fully redeemed, and fully restored to the image and glory of God.

The Mystery of God is finally finished.

The Mystery of God Is Finished

In the meantime, the Lord will continue His work of perfecting the Church until the time Christ comes at the end of this final, Laodicea Church Age.

- Phil 1.6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform (= *finish, complete, perfect*) it **until the day of Jesus Christ**

The end result will be total perfection. She will be totally perfect for she is His workmanship, and all his works are perfect.

- Eph 2.10 we are his workmanship (= *what He has made*), created in Christ Jesus
- Dt 32.4 his work is perfect
- Ps 138.8 The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me

So, then, what are the unspeakable implications of the finishing of the Mystery of God? What do we have to look forward to?

The Church becoming one with Christ and the Word.

Just as Christ was God manifest in flesh, so shall End Time believers be. Their very presence will bring a consciousness, an awareness, of the presence of Christ (cp Acts 4:13).

- **Just as** the body of Christ was a tabernacle/temple filled with all of God, **so also** the end time Church shall be a perfected temple filled with the entire Holy Spirit (Eph 2.20-22).
- **Just as** all the fulness of God dwelt in the physical body of Christ, **so also** all the fulness of Christ shall dwell in His spiritual body, the End Time Church (Eph 1.23).
- **Just as** when men saw Christ, they saw the invisible God (Jn 1.18), **so also** to see the Church will be to see the invisible God (Cp 1 Jn 4.12).
- **Just as** when men saw Christ, they saw the Father (Jn 12.45), **so also** when they see the End Time Church, they will see Christ (Jn 12.23-24).

Similarly, just as Christ was the Word, (i.e., God, Jn 1.1) made flesh, so also believers shall be living epistles of Christ (2 Cor 3.1-3).

- To see a believer living by the Word will be to behold the Word in flesh, to read an illustrated Bible (e.g., 1 P 3.1-2).
- The End Time bride will not just take in and give out the honey of the Word (SoS 4.11). She will herself **become** the honey. (Cp SoS 5.1, where the honey the bridegroom partakes of is found in his garden, which is a symbol of his bride (4.12). In other words, the bridegroom is nourished by the Word in His bride.)

To sum up, the End Time Church,

- Will not just come to **have** the full revelation of **Christ**, she will **be** the full revelation of **Christ**.
- Will not just come to **have** the full revelation of **the Word**, she will **be** the full revelation of **the Word**.

When the Church is one with Christ and one with the Word, then, indeed, shall the Mystery of God be finished.

- His bride, the heavenly Jerusalem, shall be resplendent with the glory of God (Rev 21.11).
- Out of her, the perfection of beauty, God shall shine (Ps 50.2).

This is the day of God manifest in the flesh of the believer.

This is the day of the finishing of the Mystery of God.

Hallelujah!

A Prayer

“Speak to us through Thy living Word, and let the living Word dwell in us and abide in us, that we might be shaped and formed, not to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of our spirit, into the form of the Son of God.”

59-0628M - A Deceived Church, By The World, par 2, Wm Branham

The Mystery of Iniquity

We have seen how several of the mysteries are clustered around and constituent parts of one key divine mystery, the mystery of godliness, which is the essence of God's eternal purpose.

Like God, the devil too is not without purpose. Two parallel, but diametrically opposed, conflicting mastermind plans lie behind all history.

- Through the Ages, the Spirit of God has been **continuously seeking to bring its purpose to completion**, working out all things in accordance with the **mystery of godliness**.
- Likewise with the satanic counterpart, "**the mystery of iniquity**" (2 Th 2:7). The ancient serpent has been seeking to fulfil his counterfeit plan in imitation of God's. He has no originality. He only imitates and perverts that which is of God.

Like that of God, there is one key mystery with other constituent mysteries clustered around it.

- 2 Th 2.7 the **mystery of iniquity**
- Rev 17.5 **Mystery, Babylon** The Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth
- Rev 17.7 the **mystery of the woman and of the beast** that carrieth her

Just as God's central objective is to manifest Himself *in flesh*, it is not surprising that the essence of the "**mystery of iniquity**" is the serpent's quest for **a body** through which to fully express himself. (**Incidentally, this should throw light on the reason for demon possession**).

Likewise, just as the Mystery of God shall be finished in this final Laodicean age, so also the mystery of iniquity.

- ◆ As Church is coming, "*unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*" (Eph 4.13);
- ◆ So also the **man** of sin will fully manifest the evil one in flesh, the consummation of the workings of the mystery of iniquity.

This is not the place to develop this theme, but the sharp contrast with the divine mystery should serve to throw the latter into greater relief.

Also, the Spirit of wisdom and revelation is just as necessary to discern the counterfeit plan of the evil one as for the Mystery of God.

- In Revelation 17.9 we read, "**Here is the mind which hath wisdom.**" The context is understanding "**the mystery of the woman and of the beast**" (17.7). (Cp Rev 13.18.)
- When warning of the coming "**abomination of desolation**," Jesus added, "**whoso readeth, let him understand**" (Mt 24.15).