

Christmas Songs: The Great Mystery of Godliness

1 Timothy 3:14-16

December 22, 2024

The first Christians sang the truth about Jesus.

Our text is an early church hymn.

When Jesus is known, life is changed.

Mystery of Godliness - Why Are Christians So Different?

The truth is in us, somehow. The truth is written on our hearts, somehow.

The mystery of godliness is Christ in us. Ephesians 3:20-21

What is a mystery? -

Eusebius: Godliness is a life lived in response to the knowledge of God.

Manifested in the Flesh

The Son of God existed before He became flesh and dwelt among us.

The incarnation was God hiding and revealing Himself in human flesh.

Vindicated by the Spirit

The Spirit confirmed, verified that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and our Savior.

In His resurrection it was declared this was the Son of God (1 Peter 3:18; Romans 1:4)

Seen by Angels

Angels observed Jesus throughout His life but especially His resurrection.

What do angels have to do with our holiness? (Hebrews 1:13-14)

Proclaimed Among the Nations

Go to the nations, all of them!

Believed On in the World

Multitudes came to faith in Jesus Christ. They still do.

Taken Up in Glory

This is not taken up *into* glory, but taken up *in* glory!!

Jesus came to reign in us forever.

We have an identity crisis. We do not know who we are.

Meditation

Ligon Duncan on 1 Timothy 3:16

And Paul's saying, "Now Christian, you're looking at your circumstances, and you're saying, 'Paul, I know I've made a profession of faith, but you don't know my wife! ... You don't know my husband....I can't love that man... I can't love that woman. Paul, I know I've made a profession of faith, but you don't know how overwhelming my anger is. You don't know, Paul, how difficult it is for me to forgive in this circumstance. Why, everything's been taken from me! How can I forgive?... Paul, you don't know my circumstances, you don't know what I'm up against. There's no way that I can overcome this in living the godly life.'"

And Paul replies: "Let me show you Jesus. This is the power that is at work in you! The One who was revealed in the flesh, the One who was vindicated in the Spirit, the One who was seen by angels, the One who was proclaimed in the world, the One who was believed in the world, the One who was taken up in glory! *He* resides in you! Don't tell me about your circumstances, not being able to overcome!

Paul is saying that the One who is the mystery of godliness, the One whom you have been united with by faith, He is *so much greater* than any circumstance that you face right now. He is so much greater than any habit of sin that is hindering you right now. He is so much greater than any obstacle in your personal life, in your family life, in your work life, in your community life, in whatever aspect of your life—He is so much greater than that, that there is *nothing* that His power is not able to overcome.