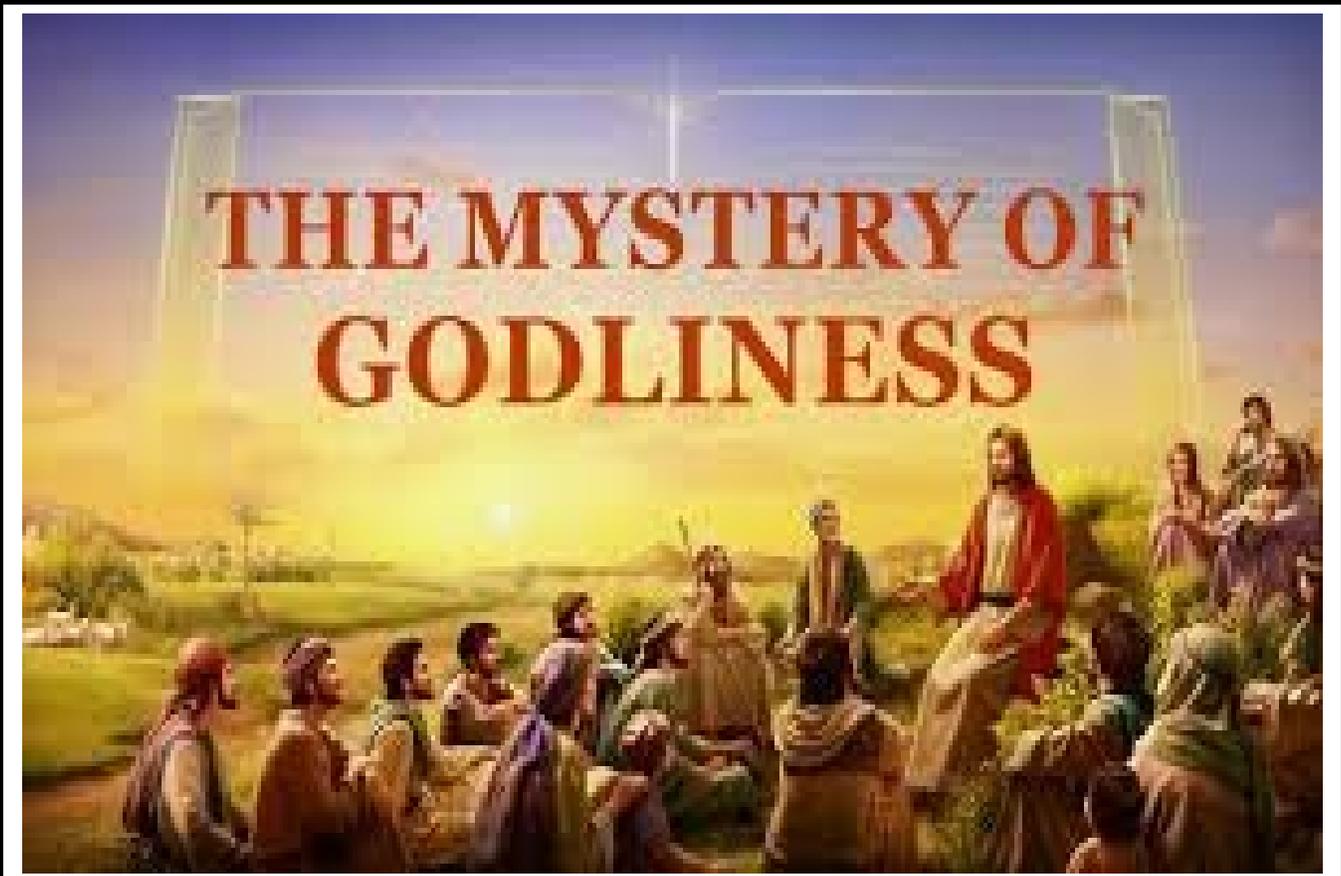


***Rev.
John Marinelli
Explores***



“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”. 1 Timothy 3:16

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Preface

We will explore the “Mystery of Godliness” in hopes of discovering the basis for human righteousness. We will seek to learn the formula to attain self- righteousness and any associated factors that may enhance or hinder our efforts. We will determine what man has to do or not do in order to become and sustain righteousness. We will learn the meaning of righteousness and why it is so important.

Introduction

What is “Righteousness? How does one attain it? Can it be turned on and off at will? Who determines the standard by which righteousness is measured? Are there degrees of Righteousness? How does a person know if they are righteousness or not? What is “Unrighteousness? Can man be unrighteous and righteous? Is righteousness the same as “Godliness?

Paul, the apostle wrote this to Timothy in the 1st century:

“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. I Timothy 3:16

The Mystery Revealed

God was manifest in the flesh. That was and is still the “*Mystery of Godliness.*” However, to understand why God took on human flesh and what that means to humanity, we will have to search the scriptures.

When you think of God, being all powerful, all knowing, supernatural and able to create things like the universe out of nothing, it seems logical to say He can do anything He wants at anytime. If that is so, why would a Spiritual supernatural being of such greatness want to be clothed with a frail, non-supernatural body? What’s the point?

The only way to really understand is to know more about God. Yes, He is all-powerful, all-knowing but He is also, gentle, loving, kind, longsuffering, joyful and compassionate. Hear what Paul, the apostle said in his letter to the Galatians:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” Galatians 5:22

This description of fruit is in fact the character of God who is the Creator of all things. He is Love. He is Peace. He is Joy. He is Good. He is Faithful. He is Gentle. He is Kind. He is, and that says a lot.

Notice that there is no selfishness, no ego, no pride, and no bad stuff at all. If folks knew this, they would stop blaming Him for doing all the evil in this world. That stuff is not in line with God’s nature. He is *morally pure*.

The problem with man is that he is not morally pure. He is immoral. Being immoral is to be sinful and it is focused against God, who is moral. It is an act of rebellion because man was originally created as a morally pure being like God.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” Genesis 1:26-27

The Good, The Bad And The Ugly

The Bible tells us that man's heart is really bad to the bone. Hear what it says:

***“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”
Jeremiah 17:9***

It wasn't always that way. Man was morally pure, good in every way. He was created in the image of God. He was the very likeness of God...all good. When anyone looked at man, they saw God's reflection.

So what happened?

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” Romans 5:12

One man, Adam, decided to do his own thing instead of what he was created for. God told him that if disobeyed, he would die. Adam's rebellion against the will of God caused him to fall from an eternal morally pure being into an immoral state. He became toxic with sin, unrighteous and unholy.

If that wasn't enough, his sin brought death that was never in God's plan and that death passed upon all men. Evil was now in the DNA of mankind.

Here are a few other scriptures on man being sinful.

As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks after God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, no not even one.” Romans 3:10-12

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23

Get the point? Without the image of God in us, we are nothing more than walking dead men and women. However, if we accept the gift of God, which is eternal life, found only in Jesus, we shall overcome death and be kept from the final judgments of God..

Great Is The Mystery

Revealing the mystery is like peeling an onion. There are several outer layers to go through before you get to its core. So it is with the “Mystery of Godliness” Lets peel the onion:

Layer #1.....Moral Purity = Righteousness

1. Godliness is explained as God-like. If you possess Godliness, you are God-like which is to say, “Morally Pure”
2. Morally pure is the essence of “Righteousness.” If you are righteous, you are morally pure or God-like.
3. Being righteous is the same as being moral. Thus, a righteous lifestyle is a life dedicated to being moral.

Layer #2.....Sin = Immorality

1. All sin can be boiled down to rebellion against God. He is the one we offend.
2. Sin earns a wage that God has declared. That wage is physical death and separation from God eternally.
3. Everyone is bound by the sin principle. No one is exempt or capable of not sinning against God. It is our very nature to rebel.

Layer #3.....Salvation Is A Gift

1. Salvation is a gift from God. He offers it to every human being.
2. Being saved is the same as being delivered from the penalty of sin, which is death.
3. God’s love for His creation is the foundation on which salvation stands. Good works or trying to be good in order to attain favor with God is not Biblical.
4. Man cannot please God enough to earn His favor. God’s grace is unmerited favor. We did not earn it. Nor do we deserve it. But we can receive it as a free gift.

Layer #4.....The Why Factor

1. **We are blessed with God's unmerited favor because He loves us.**

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. ... For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. **John 3:16***

2. **God planned it this way before the world was even formed.**

*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: **Ephesians 1:4***

3. **God's plan to save us was enacted while we were yet sinners.**

*But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. **Ephesians 2:5-9***

Layer #5.....God's Eternal Purpose

1. That we should be holy (Morally Pure) & without blame.

*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, **that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Ephesians 1:4***

2. God wants us to be with Him in eternity.

And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: Ephesians 2:5-9

3. God wants to display His mercy through our redemption.

That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ. Ephesians 2:5-9

4. God wanted Jesus to be the 1st born among many brethren. He is a prototype of a new race of beings that are all raised from the dead to be the children of God...Christ first. Then all those that believe in Him.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he (The Son) might be the firstborn among many brethren. 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. Romans 8:29-30

Level #6.....Our Response

How can we walk away from so great a blessing? God loves us with an infinite love He is even now calling and saving all who will receive His plan of salvation. To reject so great a blessing is to commit spiritual suicide. We can only receive Him and make Jesus Lord of our lives and let God conform us into the image of His dear Son.

The Mystery of Godliness

So what is the real “Mystery of Godliness: that has been hidden for all these centuries? It is, **“Christ In You.”** *This was not an easy thing to accomplish, even for God. It took thousands of years and many hidden clues found in prophecy and even clear annunciations.*

Let’s take a walk through history and read what was foretold.

1. *The messiah or Christ was foretold in the Old Testament as one that would come and save His people. (The words Messiah and Christ mean Anointed One. They are Hebrew and Greek expressions)*
2. His death as a penalty for sin was known and proclaimed by Isaiah.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 5.:4-5

3. His mission, divinity and Lordship were clearly revealed.

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.** Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth-even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. Isaiah 9:6-10*

4. His virgin birth was also known ahead of it happening.

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

This scripture tells us that a Virgin, not a young woman, as some would say, conceived and gave birth to a son who shall be known as “Emmanuel” Emmanuel literally means, “God With Us”

The virgin birth was essential in God’s plan because He required a pure sacrifice for sin. It had to be the innocent for the guilty. Throughout Old Testament history, God required an innocent lamb as a sacrifice for the sins of the people. The problem with that was it was only good for one year. The blood of Christ was a, “*Once For All*”, thing. No more every year sacrifices. His blood met God’s standard for their atonement.

If Jesus were to have been just another man like the rest of Adam’s descendants, he would have been under the sentence of death like all of us are now. His blood would be toxic with a sinful DNA. That’s why God’s Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary and she, as a virgin, conceived and bore a son. That’s why He could be called, “Emmanuel” or “God With Us.” He met the requirements of the pure spotless Lamb of God.

John, the Baptist knew that the innocent had to die for the guilty and that Jesus was God’s sacrifice. You’ll remember that when Jesus came to John’s Baptist, John saw him approaching and shouted, “Behold, the Lamb of God.” *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1:29*

John commented that he saw the Spirit descend upon Jesus. That’s how he knew that Jesus was the “Anointed One” that was foretold by the prophets. John knew his preaching was in advance of the coming of this anointed one. He knew that the mission of Jesus would be to die as a sacrifice for sin.

Questions & Answers

I am sure that you probably still have some unanswered questions. I did when I first started studying this subject over 45 years ago. I will pose a few questions and answer them so there will be no misunderstanding as to the mystery of Godliness.

1. If Jesus did not have Adam's DNA, how did He differ from Adam?

The Bible talks about the 1st and the last Adam. Remember, Adam actually means Man. Adam was a prototype from which a race would come forth. However, that entire race fell short of God's glory. Death passed upon every Adamic descendant because of sin.

The Bible presents Adam as the first man, and gives the Lord Jesus Christ the curious title of 'the last Adam' ([1Corinthians 15:45](#)). Listen to how the scriptures explain it.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. I Corinthians 15:22-23

And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. I Corinthians 15:45-47

The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. I Corinthians 15:49

Adam was not, "God With Us". He was a reflection of the original. He was created in the image of and likeness to God. Jesus was and still is the original. He is the "God With Us" man who was never created. He was and always will be God who spoke everything into existence.

See John chapter one. It tells of the beginning and you will see the WORD as being with God and was God. It was He who called into existence everything. Read that entire chapter.

2. If Jesus lives in me through His Holy Spirit, why do I still have problems with sin?

We cannot help but to sin. Our righteousness is equal to dirty old rags. We are a fallen race that is ruled by evil. When Adam fell from God's holiness, his nature changed from holy or pure to unholy or toxic. He lost the indwelling of God's Spirit that made him a living soul. He took on the nature of evil. Multiply that by millions and you have our society today, full of murder, lust, greed and other evil desires.

When Jesus comes into our hearts, we received the Holy Spirit and ended up with two natures that war against each other for rule of expression in our lives. Hear what the Bible says...

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. Galatians 5:17

This is why we are encouraged to allow Jesus to become Lord of our lives...so He can win the battle and lead us into glory. It's a matter of exercising our free will and make choices that are against the flesh. Galatians 5:22 and continuing will list the two natures. One is the works of the flesh and the other is the fruit of the Spirit. The apostle Paul tells us; *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Galatians 5:16*

3. What will happen if I allow Jesus to express His nature in me?

Your life will drastically change. Instead of living and expressing Lust, Pride, selfishness, hate and all the other deeds of the flesh, you will begin to express love, peace, joy, self control, kindness, and other fruits of God's Spirit. Life will take on a true sense of meaning as you discover God's will for your life. You will realize your divine destiny.

Conclusion

The mystery of Godliness is that we can join ourselves with our creator by allowing His Holy Spirit to dwell in us. God wants to fellowship with us on His level, in the Spirit. He made a way, where there was no way, for us to be with Him on this earth and be free from the evil that is in us and in this world. He even sees us as righteous, because of what Jesus did, His death for our sin, His resurrection from the dead and His pure life while here on earth gives us access to God.

For he hath made him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. II Corinthians 5:21

God went to great lengths to bring us back to Him. We, like sheep went astray but God did not forget about us. He loved us and calls all of us to salvation. All we have to do is accept it and join our hearts with His.

Here's how you can be delivered from sin, death and hell:

1. **Repent** for without repentance, there is no salvation. It is vital to acknowledge that you are sinful and of a fallen race. You are a prisoner of sin and in need of a Savior.
2. **Believe** that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God who came from heaven to die for your sins, was raised from the dead and now is seated at the right hand of God, The Father.
3. **Receive** Jesus into your life and make Him Lord so He can set you free, give you direction & wisdom.

“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...for the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. Romans 10:10-11

See **“How To Be Born Again”** in the free eBook section of www.christianliferesourcecenter.org

I Find Myself In God

I find myself in God.
He is my, “Everything”
I know that He is Lord,
My Life, my Hope, and King.

I find myself in God,
Not the ways of Sin.
Nor do I look to others,
To know who I really am.

I find myself in God,
To whom I bow on bended knee.
He alone is my joy and strength
And where I want to be.

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