

## The Most Marvelous Mystery

I Timothy 3:16

By

Dr. O. Wilburn Swaim, TH.D.

[docswaim@hotmail.com](mailto:docswaim@hotmail.com)

[www.exhortationplace.com](http://www.exhortationplace.com)

Introduction:

Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes mysteries all conjure up images of "cloak and dagger," or, "who dun' it" or, "The butler did it." But it is not so in the Scriptures. A Bible Mystery is defined in the following passages: Romans 16:25, 26; Colossians 1:2, 6. By simplistic definition, a bible mystery is "Something God was eternally planning to do, but didn't tell anybody; a truth that in the Old Testament is concealed, but in the New Testament is revealed. I Timothy 3:16 tells us of one such mystery, with which we are concerned here:

*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.*

But first, let's consider what moved God to devise this great plan. Genesis 3 records the Temptation and Fall of man, as Satan introduced his Great Lie. It is in three parts:

1. God's Word is not true (Heathenism) (v. 4)
  2. Sin is not so bad (Hedonism) (5a)
  3. Man can, through his own efforts, attain to Godhood (Humanism) (5b)
- I. The Mystery of Iniquity, so named by Paul, in II Thessalonians 2:7. It is the culmination of [Satan's Great Lie](#).
- A. The Lie begins with Satan (John 8:44), as recorded in Genesis, Chapter Three.
  - B. The Lie is organized into a religious system (Gen 11:1-9), and spread through out the populated earth. Note Paul's commentary on this history, in Romans 1:18ff, especially Verse 25.
  - C. The Lie is Consummated (II Thessalonians 2:3-9). Satan, the author and propagator of iniquity, embodies it in his man, the Antichrist. That plan which the Devil began in the Garden of Eden, and organized into a religious system at Babel, and has been working down through these years (II Thessalonians 2:7; I John 2:18), in the Tribulation Period becomes a person, the Antichrist. Iniquity will be fully manifested--be revealed as to what it really is. The Lie will be fully known. As Iniquity worked behind the scenes, not totally understood, but will be revealed in a person, so it is with godliness.
- II. The Mystery of Godliness, named by Paul, in I Timothy 3:16.
- A. Godliness was sought by many people, in the Old Testament.
  - B. Godliness was manifested in the Old Testament in people, but they all fell short of perfection.

C. Godliness was manifested in the Old Testament in the LAW, and while perfect in itself, it was unable to bring lost sinners to godliness (Galatians 3:21).

D. Godliness is finally perfectly manifested in God's Man (I Timothy 3:16; Galatians 4:4; Matthew 5:17). The mystery of Godliness is consummated, and finally manifested in the perfection of the God-Man, Christ Jesus.

### III. The Ultimate Blessedness of Godliness.

Now that both "mysteries" are revealed, what shall be the end of it all? Note in Revelation. 21:8 "and all liars," is literally, "all the liars" (Greek: "και πασιν τοις ψευδεσιν"). John says all who have followed Satan in his great lie, shall at the last partake with him of his (Matthew 25:41), Lake of Fire.

However, those who belong to God will become just like Christ (I John 3:1-3).

Conclusion:

Christ is NOT just the Son of God, He is God the Son!