

Living in the Age of Mystery, the Age of Faith

Scripture Reading: Matt. 28:20; Rev. 10:7; 1 Tim. 3:9; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4-6; 5:32; Heb. 12:2

I. In the dispensation from the incarnation of Christ to the millennial kingdom—the church age, the age of grace—everything is a mystery:

- A. The incarnation of Christ, as the beginning of the age of mystery, is a mystery; through the incarnation of Christ, the infinite God was brought into the finite man—1 Tim. 3:16.
- B. Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2:
 - 1. God is a mystery, and Christ, as the embodiment of God to express Him, is the mystery of God.
 - 2. As the mystery of God, Christ is the embodiment of God; all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily—v. 9.
- C. The church is the mystery of Christ—Eph. 3:4-6:
 - 1. Christ is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ.
 - 2. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery—5:32; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 - 3. During the church age, the age of mystery, Christ is building up the church to be His bride—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:16; Rev. 19:7-9.
- D. The kingdom of the heavens, the indwelling of Christ, and the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints are all mysteries—Matt. 13:11; Col. 1:27; 1 Cor. 15:51-53.

II. The age of mystery is the age of faith—Heb. 11:1, 6; Rev. 10:7; 1 Tim. 3:9:

- A. God's mysteries are known by faith; for this reason the age of mystery is also the age of faith—Rev. 10:7:
 - 1. Without faith we cannot realize God's economy, for God's economy is in faith—1 Tim. 1:4.
 - 2. God's requirement for us related to everything in the New Testament is faith—Rom. 1:16—17; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Mark 11:22; Luke 18:8.
- B. Faith is a substantiating ability, by which we substantiate, give substance to, the things not seen, or hoped for—Heb. 11:1:
 - 1. Faith assures us of the things not seen, convincing us of what we do not see; therefore, it is the evidence, the proof, of things not seen—v. 1.
 - 2. We do not regard, or look at, the things which are seen but the things which are not seen—2 Cor. 4:18.
 - 3. The Christian life is a life of things unseen, and the Lord's recovery is to recover His church from things seen to things unseen—Rom. 8:24—25; Heb. 11:27; 1 Pet. 1:8; Gal. 6:10.

III. In the present age—the age of mystery and the age of faith—we need to look away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith—Heb. 12:2:

- A. Jesus is the Author of faith, the Originator, the Inaugurator, the source, and the cause of faith—Heb. 12:2:
 - 1. We need to look away unto Jesus with undivided attention by turning away from every other object—Heb. 12:2; Psa. 27:4.
 - 2. The faith of the believers is actually not their own faith but Christ entering into them to be their faith—Rom. 3:22; Gal. 2:16.
 - 3. When we look away unto Jesus, He as the life—giving Spirit transfuses us with Himself, His believing element—Heb. 12:2; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
- B. Jesus is the Perfecter, the Finisher, the Completer, of our faith—Heb. 12:2:
 - 1. As we look away unto Jesus continually, He will finish and complete the faith that we need for the running of the heavenly race—v. 1.
 - 2. When we look away unto Him, He ministers heaven, life, and strength to us, transfusing and infusing us with all that He is so that we may be able to run the heavenly race and live a heavenly life on earth—2 Cor. 3:18.
 - 3. As believers, we need to experience the perfecting and developing of our faith through contacting the Lord in the midst of all circumstances—1 Pet. 5:9.
 - 4. We all have the same faith in quality, but the quantity of faith we have depends on how much we contact the living God and have Him increased in us—Rom. 12:3:
 - a. Faith in the progressing stage comes through our contacting the Triune God, who is faith in us—1 Thes. 5:17.
 - b. The way to receive such a faith is contact its source, the Lord, the processed and consummated Triune God, by calling on Him, praying to Him, and pray—reading His word—Heb. 4:2, 16; Rom. 10:12; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 6:17-18.
- C. "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"—Luke 18:1-8:
 - 1. The faith through which we were saved is the initial stage of faith; the faith that brought us into a life union with Christ is the linking faith—the faith that comes into us through our contacting the Triune God continually so that we may live by the Son of God—Rom. 1:17; Gal. 2:20; John 14:19.
 - 2. The linking faith is the divine requirement for the overcomers to meet Christ in His triumphant return—Luke 18:8.
 - 3. When the Lord Jesus returns, He will find a number of overcomers who are living by the linking faith and will regard them as treasures for His kingdom—Rev. 20:4, 6.