

Jesus Christ: The One and Only (Part 2)

1 Timothy 3:16

Introduction:

1. When a person stands before God, there are two key questions that will determine his or her eternal destiny. Those questions are **NOT**, “Did you perform religious rituals? Were you baptized? Did you join a certain church? Did you keep the Ten Commandments? Did you keep the Golden Rule?”
2. The key questions are simply this: “What did you **believe** about my Son, Jesus Christ? What did you **do** with my Son, Jesus Christ - did you accept Him or reject Him?”
3. What a person believes about Jesus Christ is the difference between eternal life or eternal judgment. John 3:36; 1 John 5:12
4. We learned in verse 15 that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, but the church is built upon Jesus Christ as absolute truth. John 14:6; 1 Corinthians 3:11
 - Without a risen Savior, we have nothing to build on!
5. Thus we have, in the next verse, one of the greatest verses on Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Right after Paul tells us that we are the pillar and ground of the truth, he immediately proclaims Jesus Christ in the next breath.
6. If the church is built upon the truth of Jesus Christ, and the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, then this means that the church’s main business should be the proclamation of Jesus Christ.
 - We are the pillar of the truth. We are like a pedestal that holds up a statue for all to see.
 - Philippians 2:16 proclaims that we are “*holding forth the word of life.*”
 - Each member of this local assembly puts Jesus on display in one fashion or another. We either display Him as the One who is Lord and Savior, or that He is simply second-hand stuff.
 - We are to make sure that the truth of Jesus is lifted up for all to see, and that it doesn’t fall by the wayside. A person may say, “But other churches in Daytona...” It doesn’t matter what everybody else is doing. We have a mission from our Lord.
7. When we zealously stand for truth, we may not be popular, but we are pleasing God. The temptation for the church is found in the next verse (4:1). We water down what we read in 3:16, we soften it, we become people-pleasers rather than being pillars that hold up the truth for all to see. This is how Satan gets in and undermines.
8. Our purpose is to proclaim the Person and finished work of Jesus Christ! Notice the word “*And*” in verse 16. It connects it back to the previous verse. If we are the pillar of the truth, what is truth? He answers that question with a resounding proclamation that Jesus Christ is truth!
9. Verse 16 begins, “*And without controversy...*” It is not up for debate. It’s without question. There is one plan of salvation, and one Man that it revolves around.
10. It goes on to say, “*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness...*”
 - The mystery of godliness literally means, “the gospel scheme.” God, in His infinite wisdom and power, has established a means by which sinners can be forgiven, restored, and reconciled back to God.

- It is a mystery in the sense that it is of divine origin. It is not of human instrumentality. Man couldn't have planned it, figured it out, or accomplished it. God would have to devise the plan, God would have to make it known, and God would have to accomplish it. God did all three.
 - This is why Paul exclaims, "*Great is the mystery of godliness...*" "*Great*" is the Greek word, "*megas*." It is the word we use to derive our prefix "mega." (He's mega-rich.)
11. This great and divine gospel plan revolves around and centers in one Person – Jesus Christ. We see six truths about Jesus Christ in this verse, and each of the verbs are action verbs. They represent different parts of Him, who is the truth that we must proclaim.

"God was manifest in the flesh..."

"...justified in the Spirit..."

1. "*Justified*" means "vindicated; proved; to render or show as just or innocent."
2. So the Holy Spirit rendered—or showed—Jesus Christ to be totally just, innocent, and perfect.
3. How did the Holy Spirit of God do this? The Holy Spirit descended upon Christ (Matthew 3:16), led Him (Luke 4:1), gave Him power (Luke 4:14), anointed Him (Luke 4:18), filled Christ beyond measure (John 3:34), and raised Him from the dead. Romans 1:4, 8:11; 2 Corinthians 4:14
4. Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would come when He went away, and the Holy Spirit did come. Acts 2
5. When Christ died on the cross, He was making a payment for our sin. When the Holy Spirit raised up Christ from the dead, the resurrection of Christ was receipt in hand that the payment was sufficient and was fully accepted of the Father.
6. Christ was "*justified in the Spirit*." His resurrection proved that He was sinless. Hebrews 4:15
 - He was absolutely pure from all traces of sin. He lived all His days without the personal sense of sin's guilt and the personal fear of sin's consequences.
 - Sin in others He saw, He rebuked, He forgave, He grieved over, and He suffered for, but He never fell prey to.
 - Those who were closest and fully acquainted with the details of Christ's life could not record one blemish or failure. 1 John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:19, 2:22
7. Why is it so important that Christ was justified in the Spirit? Because if Christ sinned just once, we are doomed eternally. If Christ was a sinner, He couldn't die for my sin.
8. I don't think that any miracle of Christ equals the miracle of His sinless life—to be holy in all thought and feeling, never to fail or transgress the law of God!
9. Christ overcame the power of sin and temptation, and now He lives in us to give us daily victory over sin.

"...seen of angels..."

1. Angels are heavenly messengers and heavenly warriors. Angels were dispatched to oversee Jesus Christ from the beginning of His life and earthly ministry to the very end.

- An angel revealed that Christ was coming and who He was (to Joseph and Mary). Luke 1:30
 - Angels announced His birth. Luke 2:15
 - Angels ministered to Christ personally. Matthew 4:11; John 1:51; Luke 22:43
 - Angels announced His resurrection. Luke 24:23
 - Angels revealed He would return at His ascension. Acts 1:9-11
 - Even fallen angels recognized who He was. Luke 4:41
2. Angels sing the praises of Christ in heaven because they know exactly who He is. Revelation 5:11-12

“...preached unto the Gentiles...”

1. As we said earlier, our mission is to proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ. If a church’s message does not center in Jesus Christ, then it is not of God.
2. What book comes after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (which explain the life and ministry of Christ)? It is called *The Acts of the Apostles*.
3. Apostles were men who had actually seen Jesus Christ in His resurrected body. They were eye-witnesses of the risen Christ. When we read about their lives in the book of Acts, what is the recurring theme? They proclaimed Jesus Christ! Their main business was preaching Christ. Acts 2:36, 4:10-11, 33; 5:42, 8:5, 9:20
4. During Christ’s earthly ministry, the proclaiming of Christ happened only within the confines of the nation of Israel. Israel was God’s chosen nation, and Christ was sent to them. The prophetic plan was for Israel to be converted to Christ, their earthly kingdom established by Christ, and from them blessing would proceed forth to the Gentile nations.
5. But after Christ’s ascension, Israel—as a nation—rejected Jesus Christ, their Messiah. What would happen to the earth? Israel was to be the source of blessing, but they were in unbelief. It was revealed progressively throughout the book of Acts that Christ’s work was not just for Israel, but it was for all nations.
6. We read of Christ being preached in Samaria, and then Peter was commissioned to go to the house of a Gentile by the name of Cornelius. This opened the door for the mighty Gentile ministry of the apostle Paul. When Paul was saved, it was made clear from the beginning that his ministry would be to preach Christ to the Gentiles. Acts 26:17-18
7. God would give to the world a grace period in which the good news of Christ would be proclaimed to all nations. Any individual on the earth could be saved from sin by simple faith and trust in Jesus Christ.
8. Gentiles would not have to go through Israel, or through Israel’s laws or rituals. Salvation would be sent out to the world on an absolutely equal basis through the finished work of Jesus Christ.
 - This wonderful period of grace was kept secret until revealed to Paul.
9. It is the apostle Paul that was given the office of Gentile apostleship, and it was Paul that carried the message of Christ to Gentile lands in the book of Acts.
10. Paul established churches throughout all three provinces of the Roman Empire. These churches were founded and established on the truth of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:1-2