

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2010**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
STEWARDS OF THE MYSTERIES OF GOD**

Message Twenty-One

**The Church of God—the House of the Living God,
the Pillar and Base of the Truth,
and the Manifestation of God in the Flesh**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; 2:4

- I. The desire of the Lord's heart is to gain the church; thus, we should treasure the church and love the church, even as the Lord does and as Paul did—Matt. 16:18; 13:44-46; Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:5, 9; 5:25-27; 2 Cor. 12:14-15.**
- II. The church is the church of God—1 Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 11:16:**
 - A. The expression *the church of God* indicates that the church is possessed by God and that the church has the nature of God and is constituted with the element of God—Acts 20:28; Gal. 1:13.
 - B. The church is *of* God because it is produced of God as the source and has God as its nature and essence, which are divine, universal, and eternal—1 Cor. 10:32:
 1. God is the nature and essence of the church; therefore, the church is divine—Rev. 1:12, 20.
 2. The content of the church essentially is God Himself—1 Cor. 3:16-17.
- III. The church is the house of the living God—1 Tim. 3:15:**
 - A. The house of God is the household of God—Eph. 2:19:
 1. The household of God is composed of the many sons of God as the many brothers of Christ, the firstborn Son of God—Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10-12.
 2. The Father is not a separate member of His household but is in all the children—Rom. 8:10; 12:4-5; 2 Cor. 6:16.
 - B. In speaking of the church as the house of God, Paul refers to God as the living God—1 Tim. 3:15:
 1. The living God, who lives in the church, must be subjective to the church and not merely objective—1 Cor. 3:16.
 2. Because God is living, the church as the house of God is also living in Him, by Him, and with Him; a living God and a living church live, move, and work together—Matt. 16:16; 1 Tim. 3:15.
 - C. As the house of God, the church is the dwelling place of God—the place where God can have His rest and put His trust—Eph. 2:22:
 1. In this dwelling place God lives and moves to accomplish His will and to satisfy the desire of His heart—1:5, 9, 11; Phil. 2:13.

2. In the church as His dwelling place, God expresses Himself; all that He is and all that He is doing are expressed in the church—1 Cor. 3:16; 14:24-25.

IV. The church is the pillar and base of the truth—1 Tim. 3:15:

- A. The Lord wants His church to know Him as the truth and to receive and enjoy Him as life—1 John 1:1-2, 5-6; John 11:25; 14:6; 18:37b.
- B. *Truth* means reality, denoting all the real things revealed in God's Word, which are mainly Christ as the embodiment of God and the church as the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 2:4; Col. 2:9, 19.
- C. The content of the church must be the growth of Christ in us as truth and life—v. 19; 3:4.
- D. The church is the supporting pillar and the holding base of the truth—1 Tim. 3:15:
 1. The truth is the Triune God, having Christ as the embodiment, center, and expression to produce the church as the Body of Christ, the house of God, and the kingdom of God—Col. 2:9; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; John 3:3, 5.
 2. *Truth* in 1 Timothy 3:15 refers to the real things revealed in the New Testament concerning Christ and the church according to God's New Testament economy—Matt. 16:16, 18; Eph. 5:32.
 3. The church bears Christ as the reality; the church testifies to the whole universe that Christ, and Christ alone, is the reality—John 1:14, 17; 14:6.

V. The church is the manifestation of God in the flesh—1 Tim. 3:15-16:

- A. God's manifestation was first in Christ as an individual expression in the flesh—v. 16; Col. 2:9; John 1:1, 14.
- B. First Timothy 3:15-16 indicates that not only Christ Himself as the Head is the manifestation of God in the flesh but also that the church as the Body of Christ and the house of God is the manifestation of God in the flesh—the mystery of godliness:
 1. *Godliness* in verse 16 refers not only to piety but also to the living of God in the church, that is, to God as life lived out in the church to be expressed.
 2. God is manifested in the church—the house of God and the Body of Christ—as the enlarged corporate expression in the flesh—Eph. 2:19; 1:22-23.
- C. When a church is taken care of according to what is written in 1 Timothy 1—3, the church will function as the house of the living God for His move on earth and as the pillar and base of the truth, bearing the reality of Christ and His Body—3:15; Eph. 5:32:
 1. Such a church becomes the continuation of Christ's manifestation of God in the flesh—Christ lived out of the church as the manifestation of God.
 2. This is God manifested in the flesh in a wider way according to the New Testament principle of incarnation—God entering into man and mingling Himself with man to make man one with Himself—1 Cor. 7:40; Gal. 2:20; John 15:4-5.