

The Mystery of the Church Age (04)

Our doctrinal lesson is recorded in one of the longest sentences in the Greek NT (Eph.1:3-14).

In the midst of this long Greek sentence (Eph.1:9-10), Paul introduced the doctrine of the Mystery of Church Age.

Paul introduced the Doctrine of the Mystery of Church Age in (Eph.1:9) "**He made known** (gnorizo / a.a.ptc.nsm) [to discover something previously unknown] (Eph. 3:3, 5, 10; 6:19) **to us** (personal pronoun / d.pl.m) [dative of advantage for the Church Age Believer (CAB)] **the mystery** (to musterion) **of His will**" (to thelema / g.s.n) [The Directive Will unfolding in the Plan of God]. (Col.1:9-10; 2 Tim.2:26).

<p>This lesson will study four aspects of Mystery of Church Age.</p>

1. Paul explains that the mystery of His Will, revealed with the first advent of Jesus Christ was the Mystery of Church Age.

(Eph.1:9b-10a) "According to His kind intention (**omniscience**) of which **He purposed (protithemi / a.m.ind.3ps / aorist tense)** [of the Eternal Life Conference (ELC) to set forth by decreed, foreordained] **in Him** with a view to an administration suitable (oikonomia / asf) to the fullness (tou pleroma / g.s.n) of the times (ton kairos / g.pl.m)."

(Gal.4:4) Divine Decree + Perfect Timing = Impact in human history such as Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

The word Oikonomia is used to emphasize **stewardship of the dispensation** of the church age.

The Dispensation of the Church Age is the period between the Jewish Pentecost of Acts 2 and the Rapture of the church of (1 Thess.4:13-18 and 1 Cor.15:51-58).

The Jewish age or dispensation (Abraham to Pentecost of Acts 2) **was interrupted** by the Church Age; and the priest-nation of Israel was replaced by the church of Jesus Christ as God's custodian or steward.

2. Paul was teaching that the Dispensational Plan of God is under new management in the Church Age.

This dispensational change brought new management which is the church of Jesus Christ (Col.1:24-29).

(Acts 13:46-47) "Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, 'it was necessary that word of God be spoken to **you first**; **since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life**, behold, **we are turning to the Gentiles**. For so the Lord has commanded us, '**I have placed you as a light for the Gentiles**, that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth.'" (Isa.46:6; Luke 2:32)

Here the word Oikonomia was used in two parables by Jesus to teach that there would be a dispensational change of stewardship because the priest-nation of Israel would reject their Messiah (Lk.16:1-13 / **16:2-4**) and (Matt.21:33-46 / **43-46**).

3. The change of dispensational stewardship meant that the church of Jesus Christ had become the custodian of the Word of God and of Evangelism of the world.

We will mention three universal aspects to custodians of church age.

- As custodians of the Word of God, the church of Jesus Christ has a **universal priesthood** (1 Pet.2:4-10; Rev.1:6).
- As custodians of evangelism of the world, the church of Jesus Christ also has a **universal ambassadorship** (2 Cor.5:18-21; Matt.28:18-20).
- As custodians of the work of the Lord, the church of Jesus Christ has a **universal indwelling of Holy Spirit** (1 Cor.6:19-20; Gal.3:2; John 7:37-39; 14:16).

4. The mystery of the dispensation of the church age is described as “summing up (anakephalioo / a.m.infin) of all things in Christ, things in heaven and things in earth.” (Eph.1:10b, 20-23) [Session]

Vines says, “Anakephalioo refers to consummation extending beyond the limits of the church, though the latter is to be a factor in its realization.” (Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, pg.609)

The mystery of the Church Age brings everything in heaven and on earth under the headship of the resurrected Jesus Christ, Seated (in Session) at the right hand of God. (Eph.1:10, 22; 3:10, 21; 4:15-16; Col.1:18; 3:1; 1 Pet.3:22) [Session]

The Headship of Christ is the “celebrity” part of the **Eucharist bread:**

Virgin birth

Hypostatic Union

Impeccability

Celebrityship of session (1 Cor.11:24).

The Lord Jesus Christ is our:

Head of the church	(Col.1:18)	Chief shepherd	(1 Pet.5:4)
Savior of body	(Eph.5:23)	Chief cornerstone	(Eph.2:20-21)
Mediator	(1 Tim.2:5-6)	Guardian of our soul	(1 Pet.2:25)
Advocate	(1 John 2:1)	High priest	(Heb.7:17-28)