**Great is the mystery of godliness – 1 Tim. 3:15 -16**

*I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. By common, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.*

* Advent is the time of preparing to celebrate the coming of the great mystery of godliness Jesus Christ
* Jesus Christ is the great mystery hidden from past generations now revealed in His coming to the world & the preaching of the gospel
* We celebrate & proclaim the secret, hidden glory of the Lord Jesus Christ

*We now confess with the church from times past – Great is the mystery of godliness!*

**Focal Truth: The church knows that Jesus Christ is the mystery of godliness**

**Observations**

1. **The church knows as the household of God – family of God - the mystery of godliness – Jesus Christ**

*Know how to conduct himself in the household of God…*

1. The church is a group of baptized believers who walk together as a family in faith & fellowship with the Lord & one another – “*the household of God”- oikos – family*

*So, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and of God’s household – Eph. 2:19*

1. The church is a group of baptized believers who express family love – brotherly love for one another

*be devoted to one another in brotherly love, give preference to one another in honor…contributing the needs of the saints practicing hospitality Rom. 12: 10 -12*

1. **The church knows as the called out of God - the mystery of godliness – Jesus Christ**
2. The church is a group of baptized believers - “**called out of the world**” ***which is the church of the living God*** *- for once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God, you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy 1 Pet. 2: 9 -10*
3. The church is a group of baptized believers – **who serve the living God**

***the church of the living God*** *- as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ 1 Pet. 2:5*

1. The church **submits & serve**s Jesus Christ as the Lord of the church

*He is the head of the body, the church, He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything Col. 1:18*

1. **The church knows as the pillar & support of God’s truth - the mystery of godliness – Jesus Christ**

*the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth*

* *Jesus said,* ***you shall know the truth*** *and the truth shall make you free…*
* *Jesus said,* ***I am the way, the truth & the life***
* Jesus prayed to the Father, for their sakes I sanctify Myself, **that they themselves also may be sanctified in the truth** John 17

1. The church is the pillar of God’s truth - **stulos = pillar or column**

*So, then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple of the Lord, in whom you are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit -Eph. 2:19 – 22*

1. The church is the support of God’s truth - **hedraioma = stabilizer**

Mk. 4:11 – *to you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those who are outside get everything in parables*

* The church holds to the truth of God’s word of life – **The Word of God - bible**
* The church shares the gospel of truth in a world of darkness

*among who you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word life…Phil. 2:15*

*So that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 1 Pet 2*

*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded*

*you, and I am with your always even to the end of the age – Matt 28*

**Things to Remember & Do**

1. **The church knows Jesus Christ is the great mystery of godliness**

*By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness*

1. **The church confesses** that Jesus Christ is the great mystery of godliness
2. **The church** **believes** by the Holy Spirit the hidden mysteries about Jesus Christ

Col. 2:2

1. **The church** **reveals** the wisdom of God in the great mystery of Jesus Christ & the gospel

Eph. 3:8 - 10

1. **The church** **goes to the world** to tell the great mystery of Jesus Christ & the gospel of grace

Matt. 28: 18 -30

*So that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. By common, great is the mystery of godliness:*

**To the praise of the glory of His grace! The Lord is near to the door! Come Lord Jesus!**