

The Mystery of Godliness is Great

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[0:00] 1 Timothy 3, and we'll read verses 14 to the end of the chapter. 1 Timothy 3, and we'll read verses 14 to the end of the chapter.

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In the church, we should both want the truth and be able to handle it. Because the church is to be the pillar and foundation of the truth.

We saw that last time. And tonight, we come to that profound truth. It's exactly what the church should expect, and it's what God's Word gives us.

Paul's been making the case to Timothy for qualified leaders, highly qualified leaders in the church. The church, the house of God, the people of the living God must be cared for well.

[1:44] They must be shepherded faithfully. They must be provided for. And those people must be the pillar and foundation of the truth. This is where that truth has been entrusted.

And if it is not carefully led, if it is not faithfully watched over, it will fail in its mission to be the pillar and ground of the truth.

And so only in a setting where there's leaders like we see in 1 Timothy 3 can it function aright as this pillar and foundation of truth.

But what is this truth that Paul is talking about? And what is so important about it that it must be preserved from age to age? That it must be preserved in the church until Jesus comes again? Why is it so important? Well, without this truth, there wouldn't be a church at all in the first place. The truth is what Paul calls here the mystery of godliness in verse 16.

[2:41] Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great. And he goes on to speak very clearly of Christ. The truth that the church must hold fast to is Christ.

And what Paul gives us here in verse 16 as a summary of the truth was likely part of some early Christian creed or confession or hymn. You see that it's indented in your Bibles.

It's printed differently because it is different. It's very different from the rest of Paul's writing. Very likely that he's quoting. Sometimes you'll hear, even this morning, Pastor John, as he was preaching, quoted a hymn in his preaching.

And sometimes Paul, when he wrote, would quote from early Christian hymns or confessions or creeds. And that's what we have here in verse 16. I tend to think that it's a creed because of the way he introduces it.

But regardless, it's clear that he's quoting something. An early summary of the truth. And he introduces it. It says, beyond all question. That's a good translation.

[3:41] The word is confessedly. By common confession. It's something that people confess. And it's so broadly accepted in the church that it's of common confession.

And confessedly and so most assuredly, beyond all question, there's no doubt about what he's about to say. And it's confessed in the church that the mystery of godliness is great. What's the mystery of godliness?

It's not mysterious because we can't understand it or because it's still hidden. It's a mystery that was once concealed but has now been revealed. Listen to Romans 16. Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, hidden for long ages past but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him.

It's mystery. Once hidden but now revealed. You don't stop calling a mystery novel a mystery just because you've read it all the way through and you know the outcome of it, do you? It's still a mystery. Even though you know the outcome because you've read through to the end.

And even though this mystery has been revealed in Christ, it's still called by Paul a mystery. The mystery of godliness is great. The mystery of the Christian faith. The mystery of the Christian religion is great.

[4:59] And it is great, isn't it? The evidence of this greatness was spreading during this time all over the known world. Jesus had died, but that hadn't brought an end to it, had it?

When Jesus rose from the dead, it just started that movement like wildfire. And the Christian religion began to spread all over the known world because it was great. This mystery of godliness that was being proclaimed.

It was just the beginning. His disciples had been proclaiming this risen Jesus as Lord and Christ. Churches were being established. People were believing in this Christ.

And it wasn't limited to just Jews. Gentiles were believing as well. Others were being drawn into the kingdom. Great is this mystery of the Christian religion, of godliness.

And so Paul says, confessedly great is this mystery of godliness. And you almost automatically think of Christ. Or you should for a couple of reasons, even before you get to where he so clearly speaks of Christ.

[5:57] When that word confess is used in the New Testament, it's often with a reference to confessing Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. And that word mystery often tied to Christ as well.

Like in Colossians 2, my purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ, in whom are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

So the truth that he's about to summarize this mystery of godliness is Christ. And then he gives us these beautiful six lines. Just six lines. Look at them with me again.

He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Who could it speak of except Christ? Clearly he is in view here, even though his name is never mentioned. And there's all sorts of ways we could tackle these verses.

[7:01] They're beautiful, these lines. They're rich. They're loaded with things. We could see it chronologically moving from his incarnation at the beginning to his ascension at the end.

And taking each thing in between, we could see it as poetry and the couplets and how they're so well balanced and symmetrical. Each pair of phrases has something heavenly and divine and something earthly.

You see it there? The body, there's something earthly and then it's a couplet, the spirit. And then the second one, angels and nations. And you've got the world and glory. They balance each other out beautifully.

We could talk about how all the verbs are in the same tense and the objects are in the same case. And it's remarkable how this is constructed. It's beautiful. We could talk about how it moves theologically from what Christ has accomplished, His incarnation and resurrection, to the making known of that.

He appeared after His resurrection. And He was proclaimed to all the nations. And then the response to that, He's believed on and He's taken up into glory as God rewards Him for His work.

[8:04] We could look at all of these ways and they're all valid. And each has its strengths and weaknesses. And I hope just those brief thoughts, you begin in those, you begin to see how rich is the truth that is summarized here.

But instead tonight, we're going to view it from the perspective of the church. That's what Paul's writing about here, isn't it? He's been writing to Timothy about the church. About how people should conduct themselves in the church.

Who should lead the church. What should be going on, what should not be going on in the church. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. And so tonight, very simply, we want to see the message of the church and the mission of the church.

The church's message and mission. We just want to see the glory of Christ as the truth which the church must guard with her very life. So the message of the church from these six lines.

In a word, the message is Jesus. We could stop there and go home. And you've heard the message of Jesus. You know the message of Jesus. You know what the church is to proclaim.

[9:11] Let's look at it from Paul's perspective here how he describes it in this quotation of this creed or confession or hymn. Jesus, the message we must proclaim.

The only message that can accomplish the purpose or the mission of the church and the world which is to reach lost sinners and to build up the saints and the truth. Only the message of Jesus can do those things.

And what do we learn of Him here? Nothing new. But I hope it's a sweet reminder to you tonight to see Jesus. First of all, He was revealed in the flesh or He appeared in a body.

Jesus, the Son of God, very God Himself, came to earth as a man. We know that. That's common to us.

It's familiar to us. We read it in John 1. But don't let it be common to you tonight. Be amazed at it again. The Word became flesh. Same Word here.

[10:09] He appeared in the flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory. The glory of the one and only who came from the Father full of grace and truth. To say that Jesus was revealed in the flesh, that He appeared in a body, is to say that there was a time when He didn't have a body and when He wasn't visible.

He at one time was not visible to human eyes. He didn't have a body before He came to earth. But when He came, He took on a body. A body that He still has today. He took on that flesh.

Stooped to our level to become a man like us. And we know that He did that to represent us as men, as people before God because a high priest must be chosen from among men.

And so Jesus stooped to our level. He became flesh. Hebrews 2, since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity. For this reason, He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, that He might make atonement for the sins of the people.

He was made flesh so that He could represent us as our high priest. He appeared. He was revealed. And why was that? Hebrews 9, 26, but now He has appeared.

[11:26] That's our word. Once for all at the end of the ages. Why? To do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself. John says the same thing. 1 John 3, 5, but you know that He appeared. Why?

So that He might take away our sins. He appeared in the flesh to take away our sins to be the Savior of mankind. That's what we read of in Philippians 2 where we see Jesus where we see Jesus not thinking about Himself first.

Not being selfish. Not thinking of His own well-being and His comfort, but thinking about us first.

How humbling it is to us who are so selfish to think about Christ.

And we're going to mix up the mission and the method tonight because you can't really, or the mission and the message, you can't really separate them. The message is Jesus. And the mission is to proclaim that Jesus to the nations.

There, I've told you the mission. And we do that for a couple of reasons. And we've heard it already as we worshiped and sang tonight. We proclaim Jesus so that people might believe and come to know Him and be saved.

[12:33] But then we don't stop preaching Jesus. Oh, you've believed in Jesus. You've got that. You've trusted in Him. And so now we're going to move on to other things. No, we keep preaching Jesus to God's people.

So that they might be built up in the faith. And when you think about Jesus, back to the message, appearing in a body, isn't that good for us as the people of God? Don't we need that message of Jesus?

Because I'm self-centered. Selfish. And I think about Jesus who came from heaven to earth for me, who didn't put His own interests first.

And I'm rebuked. We think things like, there's no way I'm going to do something like that. I'm not going to witness. I'm not going to serve that unworthy person over there.

It's too far outside of my comfort zone. Those people aren't worthy of my time and attention anyway. I've got more important things to do. I need to look out for me. And then we think, I'm glad that Jesus isn't like me.

[13:35] I'm glad that He isn't selfish like I am. That He was willing to come in the flesh to save a wretch like me. And there's the message. Jesus, come in the flesh. And we see the message fulfilling the mission of the church.

It's building God's people. It's rebuking us. It's showing us the way. And so, we must go on trusting in Christ that we might grow in grace.

Where is my heart of selflessness, humility, and service? Jesus, the Son of God, the object of worship in heaven, came in the flesh. There's the heart of our message. Jesus, come in the flesh. Whole Old Testament points forward to it. Moves forward towards that. The New Testament records it for us. That's what the Gospels are. Their message of Jesus. Come in the flesh, right? And the rest of the New Testament unfolds the implications, the outworkings of Jesus. Come in the flesh. But then there's more. He appeared in a body, or He was revealed in the flesh.

[14 : 31] He was vindicated by the Spirit. Jesus could have come in the flesh. Claimed to be the Son of God. Claimed to be the Messiah. And if He didn't have any vindication for that, any demonstration of that, He would have been written off as a fraud.

Just as some people did write Him off. And He came and He did miracles, didn't He? To prove who He was. Demonstrated His divine power. But another validation of His claim was by way of the Holy Spirit.

And this, I think, is a reference to the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection of Christ from the dead was vindicated by the Spirit. And here's why I think that. Romans 1, verses 3 and 4.

Paul's writing to the Romans about God, and then regarding His Son, the Son of God, who as to His human nature, that is, to His flesh, was a descendant of David. And, listen to this, who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. Go back and read Romans 1, 3 and 4 again. You'll see that vindicated in the Spirit is Jesus being raised from the dead. That putting a stamp of validation on His claim to be the Son of God.

[15 : 42] He is the Son of God. Look, He didn't stay in the grave. He was raised by the power of the Spirit. Declared to be the Son of God. And so the resurrection of Jesus from the dead was the vindication of His claims.

If He had remained in the grave, Jesus would have just been another fraud. Somebody else that said they were the Messiah. Sin and death in the grave would not have been conquered.

We would still be looking for the coming Messiah, but that is not so. He was vindicated by the Spirit. He did rise from the dead. Death is vanquished. The last enemy that we need no longer fear.

We can take that step by faith because Jesus rose from the dead. And that's central to what we believe about Jesus. There are people that would claim to be Christians even that deny the physical bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

And then they say you don't have to have that to have the truth that comes from it. You can still have all the benefits that the Bible talks about, but Jesus didn't really rise from the dead. No. Paul says that if Jesus has not been raised, our preaching is useless, and so is your faith.

[16 : 53] And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins, then all those who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead. If Jesus is still in the grave, then we're wasting our time here tonight. It's useless what I'm standing up here doing.

You believing in Jesus is useless if He wasn't raised from the dead. But He was. He appeared in the flesh, and He was vindicated by the Spirit. That's why Paul says, but Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.

Brothers and sisters, we don't have a Savior who is still in the grave tonight. I don't care what some documentary says they think they found in a grave in Palestine.

They didn't find Jesus because He's not there. He's risen. I'm a week early. Next Sunday is Resurrection Sunday.

[17 : 54] Every Sunday, though, is Resurrection Sunday, right? And so good to talk about Resurrection whenever we find it in the pages of Scripture because Jesus is not in the grave. And that means that there is hope for us.

That we aren't wasting our time here. That your faith is not in vain. Because Jesus was vindicated by the Spirit. See, yeah, that message, that's good for the church. That's good truth.

It builds us up in our faith. And then He appeared to angels. It could mean several things. We see Jesus with angels various times. After His temptation in the Garden of Gethsemane, it could be a reference to His ascension, going back into glory.

But we have that already at the end of the list. I think it's a reference to His appearances after His resurrection from the dead. You remember it was an angel that came down and rolled the tomb

stone away.

Matthew 28, 2. And it was in all four of the Gospels, record for us, angels reporting to the women that come to the grave that Jesus had risen and He was no longer there.

[18:54] Presumably He had appeared to those angels. Angels are greatly privileged beings. They get to be in heaven for all eternity and for time past as well in the presence of God.

But there are things that they don't know. Just as the prophets who prophesied didn't always fully understand what they were talking about. So angels long to look into these things. 1 Peter 1.12. But some of these angels got to come down and see the risen Lord. Privileged angels. Further lending weight to the truth that Jesus was raised from the dead. He was witnessed by human witnesses but also by angelic ones.

This too, the credibility of the resurrection, part of our message. And finally, we'll skip a couple of lines and come back to them, but finally Jesus was taken up in glory. A reference to His ascension. Something else that was witnessed by men and angels. The angels, you know, came back to the disciples and said, what are you looking at? He's been taken up. He's going to come back the same way that He went up into the sky.

[19:58] That too witnessed by men and angels. But He was taken up into glory. Glory is heaven where He dwells with His Father. Where He was with His Father before He came in the flesh and where He is now with His body in glory with God.

And many times the church's message stops with the cross. Jesus died for our sins. And that's all He preached. He died for our sins. And we have to have that. That's part of the message. It's what we're saying tonight.

That He came in the flesh. But a lot of churches, a lot of messages, that's all you hear. He died on the cross for our sins. Well, if He died on the cross and you missed the resurrection part that we just talked about, then we've seen our faith is in vain.

He didn't just die. He rose from the dead. If He didn't rise from the dead, then what He did on the cross didn't do anything. But then, people that will proclaim the death and resurrection sometimes forget the ascension.

Which is also equally important. It's vital to the church's message as well. Jesus isn't still on the earth somewhere. He didn't die again after He was raised from the dead.

[20:58] You know, all these people in the Bible, besides Jesus, that were raised from the dead, they had to die again at some point. Lazarus was raised from the dead, but He had to die again. That's not what happened with Jesus after He rose from the dead.

He didn't die again. He ascended into glory. Why does that matter? Why is that part of the church's message? Why is that important? Well, let's let Paul tell us in his letter to the Ephesians, chapter 1. Verse 20, he's praying that they might know the power of God which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion and every title that can be given, not only in the present age, but also in the ones that come.

And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way.

Jesus' ascension into glory is returned to heaven means that He's now on the throne ruling, reigning over all things. It means that He can't be accepted as Savior without being followed as Lord because He is Lord, reigning over all things, including His church.

[22:14] It means that we who are the church, part of the church, are His body. He's head over all things for the church, which is good news for us that Jesus is our head. He is the one from whom we draw our life.

It's why He must be our message. He's our head. He's the one who leads us, guides us. We don't go our own way. We don't cut our own path. We don't blaze our own trail. We follow Jesus, our head, our leader. He's revealed Himself in His Word.

And He's sitting in heaven ruling over all things for the church, which means He's going to preserve us to the end. That's a message I need to hear because my heart is weak and it's fearful at times. And I'm uncertain about the future and what His plans are for me and for the church. And all of that should go away when we hear that Jesus is on the throne, ruling over all things for the church. Jesus is head over all for the church. It's for our good and for His glory. He's preserving us until the end. We don't need to fear about the rise and fall of nations and leaders and powers that come and

go because Jesus is above all rule and authority and power.

[23 : 20] He's ascended into heaven. And the message of the church must include that ascension or it will produce Christians who are fearful and uncertain and unconvinced that Jesus must be obeyed in every part of life.

And so the message of the church must be, it must always be, Christ-centered. Jesus is the message of the church.

Come in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, and taken up into glory. That is what the church must proclaim. And if it is not our message, then we will fail in our mission. And what is that mission?

Well, in a word, the mission is Jesus. To proclaim Him to all the nations that He might be believed on in all the world. You see those two lines in this creed. He was preached among the nations, was believed on, and the world.

The mission of the church is to proclaim Jesus and to proclaim Him to all the nations. And there's two reasons for that that we've already touched on. One, so that people might believe and be saved from their sins.

[24 : 31] And then that those who have believed might go on believing. That they might be built up in their faith. That they might be shown the way of life and health and godliness. The mission of the church was given by Jesus after He rose from the dead before He ascended.

In Matthew 28, the familiar words, All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations. That's our word, preached among the nations.

Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I'm with you always to the very end of the age.

That began in earnest after Jesus rose into heaven. But the commission was given before He went up, isn't it? And so we have here our mission to preach Jesus among the nations that He might be believed on in the world.

His apostles began that work. They were His witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. They began that work and churches began being established.

[25 : 38] People were believing in Jesus. Great is this mystery of godliness that was being proclaimed all over. And not just with the Jews as we said earlier, but to Gentiles as well. To the nations.

The Gentiles. What a remarkable thing this Jewish Messiah would be a Savior for all people. It had been prophesied. You can go back and see it in the prophets, in the Psalms.

And now it's coming to pass. The mission of the church is making that a reality. People from all over the globe coming to know the Savior. The disciples took that commission. They ran with it.

And the church today must continue it. It's our task to proclaim and to preach. Not our own ideas. Not what we think is a good plan.

What we think is best. What we are to preach Him. Jesus. He is the message of the church. We just got done talking about the message. The mission is to proclaim that message to all the nations.

[26 : 35] And what a sad thing it is then in our day to see so many so-called churches proclaiming all sorts of stuff but not Jesus. You can go to church today and you can hear all sorts of platitudes and positive thinking and how to do this and that and all sorts of things which may be helpful and good but if it's without Christ it's empty.

It's nothing. A church that doesn't proclaim Christ as a synagogue of Satan. That's why Paul later tells Timothy 2 Timothy 4 preach the word.

Not preach your own ideas. Not preach what people want to hear. He says preach the word for the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead to suit their own desires they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

They will turn their ears away from the truth. The church is supposed to be the pillar and ground of the truth but people will turn away from the truth and turn aside to miss. And as long as people have desires things they want to hear there's going to be somebody to fill their ears with those things. Somebody will tell them what they want to hear but it can't be the church. The church must proclaim Jesus in Him crucified. Risen and ascended.

[27 : 59] And we must proclaim Him. We must preach Him among the nations. It's a word based message. And let's say we draw him a hymn or we show movies about Him. It's just preaching.

It's simple. It's not a real popular medium in our day but it's the one that God has called us to to preach. Jesus in all the nations. And so let's preach Him in all the nations. Let's proclaim Him in Bremen. So that sinners might be saved here and so that the saints that are gathered here might be built up in their faith. That's the mission of the church. Let's preach Him in Bremen. Let's support proclaimers in the Philippines and in France and Kenya and all over the world.

Let's send missionaries to proclaim Him in other countries. By His strength and power let us stay the course. Let us fulfill the great commission that God gave His church.

Let's not fall short in that mission. He was preached among the nations was believed on in the world. That's why we preach Him so that He might be believed on in the world.

[28:57] It's only through faith in Christ that men can be saved from their sins. Okay, Jesus came. He did this great work of redemption. But if nobody ever hears about it then they can't believe on Him.

And if they don't believe on Him then they won't be saved. And so He's got to be proclaimed in the world so He can be believed on. And isn't that what we need? Belief. Faith. Paul was an example in chapter 1 of those who would believe on Him and receive eternal life.

And why is it that God sent His Son? You know it. It's John 3.16. It's the most well-known verse in the whole world. Overused and abused perhaps.

But that doesn't make it any less true. Why did God send His Son? For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth believeth.

That's old English for believes. Same word here. Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. We preach Him so that people may believe on Him.

[30:00] Do you believe? Have you trusted in this Jesus? Has God given you the gift of faith? If He has them, thank Him.

Praise Him. Praise Him that you're part of this believed on in the world. You're one of those that has believed on Him and so found salvation. It means that Jesus is your Savior, your Lord, your High Priest, your Brother, your King, your Prophet.

All of these things He is for you and more. The message has come to you. The church has reached you with its mission. But it doesn't stop there.

We keep preaching Christ to you and that's what builds us up and leads to godliness. It's seeing Christ. Understanding every day that our sins are forgiven in Christ.

It's rejoicing that the old man has been done away with and that we're new creations. Every day as we see the glorious Christ, it makes us want more and more to kill off the remaining sin that put Him on the cross in the first place.

[31:06] the proclamation of Christ is the ongoing mission of the church to those who have believed so that they might grow in likeness to Christ and in grace.

Do you believe? Are you living by faith every day? Or have you ever believed in the first place? The way you can be saved is by believing in this Jesus.

This Jesus that we've talked about tonight. I don't know. It's nothing new. You know that He died. He was buried. He rose from the dead. He ascended. And sadly, I think that's the attitude that some of you have to this message of Jesus.

Big deal. He died. He rose. I hope that no Christian here ever is that heart of whatever. I know the message of Jesus. I hope it amazes you every time you hear it.

Let it amaze you as you read through the Gospels this week and prepare for what's known as Good Friday. It's really a horrible Friday, wasn't it, when our Savior was killed?

[32:10] As you think of His resurrection and Easter. But some here tonight don't see the significance of it. You haven't believed.

You don't have that amazement at what Christ has done. I don't think the church has failed in her mission to you. You've heard the message.

You've heard it from your mom and dad or from another loved one. You've heard it from Sunday school teachers and you've heard it preached here. The mission has reached you.

You know about Jesus. And the question is, will you be one of these who has believed on Him in the world? Will you put your hope and your trust in Him? Will you join with this happy band of believers that love our Savior?

Not like we should, but we love Him. And that seek to honor Him. Not like we should. But that's our aim and our goal. Will you come and trust in Him tonight?

[33:11] You can, you know. Right where you sit. You can trust in His perfect work on the cross. Believe in His powerful resurrection. Follow Him as the ascended Lord. Right where you sit tonight. You don't have to wait for the end of the message.

You don't have to come forward. Right where you sit. You say, God, be merciful to me, the sinner. Thank you for Jesus. I do believe. Pray that God would give you that gift of faith.

Come and find Jesus tonight to be your all in all. And you can join us in that mission of proclaiming Christ to the ends of the earth. We've got a glorious message.

It's Jesus. We've got a glorious mission. It's making this Jesus known. In other words, we're always to be Christ-centered in our message and in our mission.

I can't think of a better summary than Romans 10. Don't turn there. Just listen. And listen for that word of confession. Confessedly great is the mystery of God.

[34:10] Listen for Jesus as Lord. Listen for His resurrection here. Listen for belief. For trusting in this Jesus. Listen for the Gentiles. For the nations being brought in. And listen for the preaching.

The proclaiming of this Jesus. In Romans 10. If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified. And it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scriptures say, anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame. For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, the nations.

The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then can they call on the one they have not believed in?

And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching, proclaiming to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

[35:17] As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. The church's mission is to proclaim Jesus so that people might believe on Him and be saved from their sin and go on to live a life of holiness and godliness that is pleasing to Him.

I'd like you to confess it with me tonight. You have it there in front of you, this confession in 1 Timothy 3 and verse 16. By common confession, confessedly great, is this mystery of godliness. Let's confess it together as it's recorded for us here. Most of you have, I think, the NIV. And so this is what we believe about our Savior Jesus.

Say it with me. He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Amen. That's the church's message. That's our mission. That's what we believe about our Savior. Well, let's conclude tonight by taking our hymnals and turning to Hymn 370. Hymn 370 has the message, Jesus saves, and it has the mission.

[36:36] We're to bear that news to every land. Let's pray. Our Father, we thank You that Jesus saves. We thank You that He was revealed in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, and taken up into glory.

We thank You that we confess this great and mighty Savior and that He is now sitting at Your right hand, ruling over all things for the church. May we find comfort and peace in this message.

And we pray that You would send this message to the ends of the earth. Send it forth right here in Bremen. Come and draw some to Yourself. Give them the gift of faith that they might believe in this Jesus and so be saved.

Make this message powerful in lands all around the world where Your Word is preached in truth, where Jesus is preached. We pray that He would be believed on in all the world.

That You would be adding to Your kingdom day by day and that You would be building those saints up into Your truth. That they might become more and more like our Savior Christ. We thank You for Jesus. And we pray in Jesus' name.

[37:49] Amen.