

The Vision of Christ and the Church

by Witness Lee

Everyone who serves the Lord must be a person with a vision. The apostle Paul said that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision (Acts 26:19). He served for his whole life according to the vision that he had received. If we have a desire to serve, we need a vision. We should ask the Lord to grant us a vision. We need to see the most central vision, the most fundamental vision, in God's purpose so that we may have a real understanding and seeing of the most basic and central matters concerning God's intention.

Christ and the Church Being a Great Mystery in the Universe

Ephesians 5:32, a simple verse from the Scriptures, shows that there is a great mystery in the universe—Christ and the church. In the Bible a number of mysteries are mentioned, but only this mystery, the mystery of Christ and the church, is a great mystery. First Timothy 3:16 says, “Confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh.” This mystery refers to Christ, on the one hand, and to the church, on the other. Therefore, we can clearly and definitely say that Christ and the church are a great mystery. Although the Bible says that the mystery of God is Christ and that the mystery of Christ is the church, only when Christ and the church are mentioned together does the Bible say that this is a great mystery. We can say that if there were only Christ and not the church, the mystery would not be complete, and if there were only the church and not Christ, the mystery would not be possible. Therefore, this mystery must be constituted with both Christ and the church.

According to common understanding, a mystery is something hidden and generally unknown to people. The meaning of the mystery mentioned in the Bible, however, goes beyond this. Strictly speaking, in the Bible a mystery not only refers to things that are incomprehensible and unknown to men but also to things that are hidden in God's heart.

For example, the universe with all the things created by God is very evident and therefore not a mystery. However, the purpose of God's creation of the universe is a mystery. All the people in the world have seen the God-created universe, but from the ancient days to the present time, very few have been able to fathom the purpose of God's creation. This is because the purpose for the creation of the universe was hidden in God's heart. It is nearly impossible for man to touch God's purpose, God's plan, which is hidden in His heart. Hence, it is a mystery. This is the principle concerning mysteries mentioned in the Bible.

Not only the purpose of God's creation is a mystery to the world, but even the church and the saints are a mystery to the world. Today people see that there are Christians and there is the church, but very few know why there are Christians and why there is the church. The unbelievers do not know this, and even many of those who serve and work for the Lord do not necessarily understand this, because this is also a mystery.