THE MYSTERY IN A NUTSHELL
(1 Timothy 3:16)

I. God was manifested in the flesh.
   A. God came to earth in the form of man (John 1:1, 14; Philippians 2:5-7).
   B. He did so in the person of Jesus the Christ.
   C. Paul speaks to the deity of Jesus and calls Him God.
      1. God Himself attested to this fact (Matthew 17:5).
      2. Jesus was truly God incarnate.
   D. Jesus came to this earth to more fully reveal God to us.
   E. If Jesus was not God in the flesh, there is no way heaven would have revealed to Peter what it did (Matthew 16:15-17).
   F. If Jesus was not God in the flesh there is no way He could have truly answered Philip as He did (John 14:8-9).
   G. John summed it up in the first two verses of his first epistle (1 John 1:1-2).
      1. The apostles saw Him and touched Him.
      2. The One they saw and touched had been with the Father and the only way this was possible was if Jesus was deity Himself.

II. He was justified in the Spirit.
   A. The Holy Spirit attested to the fact that Jesus was God in the flesh.
   B. He did so at His baptism (Matthew 3:16).
   C. He attested to Jesus as the Son of God by the miracles performed by Jesus and those blessed with gifts to perform miracles (Matthew 12:28; Acts 3:2-6).
   D. He attested to Jesus by the things He imparted to the apostles after the ascension of Jesus.
   E. He attests to Jesus as the Son of God even today as He works on the hearts of men through means of the gospel.
      1. The words of the Bible that still prick the hearts of men are given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
      2. Thus, even today, the Holy Spirit justifies the claims of Jesus as the Son of God.

III. He was seen of angels.
   A. Angels announced the birth of our Lord (Luke 2:13-14).
   B. Angels looked out for the good of Jesus.
      1. An angel warned Joseph to flee to Egypt (Matthew 2:13).
      2. They ministered to Him in the wilderness (Matthew 4:11).
      4. An angel rolled away the stone for Jesus (Matthew 28:2).
      5. An angel announced His resurrection (Luke 24:4-7).
      6. Angels announced the fact of Him returning one day (Acts 1:10-11).
   C. When Jesus does return it will be with His angels (2 Thessalonians 1:7).
   D. Why would the angels be so interested in the life of this man if He was not the Son of God?

IV. He was preached to the Gentiles.
   A. This is important because it shows the gospel message is for all mankind, not just the Jews.
   B. God wants all men to be saved, including the Gentiles.
   C. It was prophesied that the one coming would be sought after by the Gentiles (Isaiah 11:10; 42:1-6; 60:3).
   D. What this shows is the equality of all men spiritually speaking.
      1. We are all in need of a Savior (Romans 3:23).
      2. We are all equal at the foot of the cross.
   E. This shows that the message is for all men and that is what Paul preached to the Ephesians (2:14-15).

V. He was believed on in the world.
A. The gospel message went out across the known world in the time of Paul (Colossians 1:27).

B. That message, the mystery about which Paul wrote to Timothy, resulted in the conversion of many in the world.
   1. It resulted in 3,000 being saved on Pentecost.
   2. It resulted in about 5,000 being saved in Jerusalem.
   3. It resulted in a number of the priests being saved.
   4. It resulted in Cornelius and his house being saved.
   5. It resulted in souls in Antioch being saved.
   6. It resulted in souls in Thessalonika, Lystra, Corinth, Ephesus and every other city into which it went being saved.

C. Everywhere the gospel has gone, lives have been changed.

D. This mystery that brings about godliness causes people to believe in Jesus all over the world.
   1. The idea of “believed” here is that of a part put for the whole.
   2. Believed stands for all the commands of the gospel being obeyed.
   3. The people mentioned did not stop at belief but kept going, obeying all the commands of Jesus.

E. The fact is, this aspect is still being fulfilled today.
   1. The gospel is going out all over the world and people are still believing it.
   2. A friend is on a mission trip to Tanzania and wrote back about two souls believing the gospel.

F. People are still being made godly by this great mystery.

VI. He was received up into glory.
A. Our Lord, once He was done with His work on earth, ascended back into heaven (Acts 1:8-11).
B. Paul plainly taught this (Ephesians 4:8-10).
C. The gospel accounts teach this (Mark 16:19).
D. Jesus said this would take place (John 14:12; 16:16; 20:17).
E. This is a vital part of the mystery because it gives us encouragement to be godly.
   1. We are promised that He has gone to prepare a place for us (John 14:2).
   2. It gives us hope beyond this life when tied to the resurrection.
   3. He promised to come back, therefore He had to go.
   4. Thus, we have motivation to be godly through obedience to the mystery about which Paul here speaks.