

Stewards of the Mysteries

1 Corinthians 4:1

Believers are stewards of the "mysteries" of God, hidden truths that He has revealed to believers. These "mysteries" come from the Greek μυστήριον *musterion* 1) hidden thing, secret, mystery; 1a) generally mysteries, religious secrets, confided only to the initiated and not to ordinary mortals; 1b) a hidden or secret thing, not obvious to the understanding; 1c) a hidden purpose or counsel; 1d) secret will; 1e) secret will of men; 1f) secret will of God; 2) the secret counsels which govern God in dealing with the righteous, which are hidden from ungodly and wicked men but plain to the godly; 3) in rabbinic writings, it denotes the mystic or hidden sense of an OT saying, or of an image or form seen in a vision, or a dream.

Origin: from a derivative of Greek, μύω *muo* (to shut the mouth); TDNT - 4:802,615

THREE LEVELS OF HIDDEN TRUTH

- (1) Some things are known only to God and are never revealed (Deut 29:29; Mark 13:32) because of God's sovereignty (Rom 9:15-18) and providential working (Rom 11:33-36).
- (2) Some things were hidden for a time and then revealed through God's special representatives: prophets (Amos 3:7; Dan 2:18-30, 40 "secrets"); righteous (Prov 3:32); believers (Matt 11:25).
- (3) Some things were hidden at one point in time to be revealed to believers in the latter days or the End Time (Matt 13:17; Rom 16:25-26).

THERE ARE 12 SACRED SECRETS REVEALED TO BELIEVERS IN SCRIPTURE

2 Relate to Christ

- (1) The mystery of God incarnate (Col 2:1-3)
- (2) The mystery of Christ indwelling in every believer (Col 1:26-27)

3 Relate to Sin

- (3) The mystery of iniquity (2 Thess 2:7-10)
- (4) The mystery of Israel's unbelief (Rom 11:25)
- (5) The mystery of Babylon:
 - (a) Old Babylonian Empire under Nimrod- Gen 10:8-10; 11:1ff.
 - (b) Neo-Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar - Daniel 1-5
 - (c) Mystery Babylon under the Antichrist - Rev 17:5

4 Relate to the Church

- (6) The mystery of the church (Rev 1:20)
- (7) The mystery of the church as the body of Christ (Eph 5:22-32; 4:12, 16)
- (8) The mystery of the church as the bride of Christ (Eph 5:22ff.; 1:14; Rev 19:6-10)
- (9) The mystery of the resurrection of believers and the rapture of the church (1Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:13-18)

3 Relate to the Gospel

- (10) The mystery of the Gospel (Eph 6:19)
- (11) The mystery of human access to divine wisdom (1 Cor 2:7, 16)
- (12) The mystery of the kingdom of heaven (Matt 13:11, 17)