

**Etymology of *Musterion*: The Doctrines and Secrets of the Cults; Term Used by Jesus & Paul to Describe the Mystery Doctrines of the Church Age**

**3. ETYMOLOGY OF *MUSTERION***

1. *Mustērion* is a derivative of the verb **μυέω, *mueō***, which literally means “to shut the mouth,” but whose definition is “to initiate into the mysteries” of an ancient fraternity’s secret doctrines, rites, and rituals.
2. The secrets were taught with the understanding that no one outside the fraternity could ever be made privy to them. Those who learned them would share in the destiny of the gods they worshipped.
3. The initiation was designed to determine if the candidate would persevere under pressure, learn the secrets, and then execute the rituals.
4. If the candidate passed the tests then he was considered **μύστης, *mustēs***: one initiated because he persevered and learned the secrets and how to perform the rites and rituals.
5. The rites and rituals were called **μυστικός, *mustikos*** and the doctrines and secrets pertaining to them were referred to as **μυστήριον, *mustērion***, the word that came into the New Testament to describe the mystery doctrines of the Church Age.

6. The Lord used this word in His Parable of the Sower:

**Matthew 13:11** - “To you [ **disciples** ] it has been granted to know the mysteries [ **μυστήριον, *mustērion*** ] of the kingdom of heaven [ **doctrines of the Church Age** ], but to them [ **the crowd** ] it has not been granted.”

7. A parable is a teaching aid in the form of a brief tale intended to figuratively illustrate the reality of underlying doctrines and can only be understood by those who have special insight, i.e., positive volition.
8. The unbeliever could understand the narrative of the story but was unable to perceive the doctrinal content behind the story.
9. Paul used this word to illustrate the mystery doctrines of the Church Age. For examples:

**Colossians 1:25** - Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God,

**Colossians 1:26** - that is, the mystery [ **μυστήριον, *mustērion*** ] which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints,

**v. 27** - to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the confidence of glory.

**Romans 16:25** - Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,

**v. 26** - but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith.

10. Thus the *mustērion* spoken of by Jesus and Paul makes reference to Church Age doctrines that were withheld from the Old Testament canon until the Jews historically rejected Jesus as the Christ during the Incarnation.