

The Spiritual Life of the Church Age: 10 Problem-Solving Devoices Developed through the Stream of Consciousness; the Divine Decree, the Church, & Prophecy

23. The spiritual life of the Church Age believer is an advance on that of Israel's. It goes beyond the faith-rest technique to include (1) orientation to grace, something to which the arrogant and legalistic believer cannot adjust and consequently cannot advance in the spiritual life, (2) doctrinal orientation, a level of spiritual growth that the arrogant and legalistic believer cannot attain due to residence in the cosmic system, (3) a personal sense of destiny, a level of growth that diminishes the challenges, problems, and exigencies of time through emphasis on the glory of the eternal future, (4) personal love for God replaces personal love for people, the latter requiring others to maintain perfection and, when they fail, to destroy them through iconoclastic arrogance; the former providing the power and momentum to move forward to (5) unconditional love for one's fellowman, something a self-absorbed person is incapable of doing, but which the advancing believer utilizes to "live peaceably with all people" (Romans 12:18, NET), and leads to (6) sharing the happiness of God, a condition of soul whereby the believer deflects the disappointments of life because of (7) his occupation with Christ.
24. Occupation with Christ is the target, the objective, the destination of the believer's spiritual life in the Church Age. Once arrived, the believer ceases to depend upon people for love, happiness, help, or support. He becomes spiritually self-sustaining. No suffering, disaster, shock, or pressure can intrude on his soul and dim the elucidating presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹
25. Prior to the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, the spiritual life for the Church Age was hidden, a fact pointed out next in verse 9 by the present active participle of the verb **ἀποκρύπτω, apokruptō**: to cover, conceal, hide, or keep secret.
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| perfect: | Consummative: emphasizes the completed action of a past action or process from which a present state emerges. ² |
| passive: | This mystery receives the action of having been hidden. |
| participle: | Telic: indicates the purpose of concealing the Church Age. |

¹ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Freedom through Military Victory*, 4th ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2003), 77.

² Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 577.

26. How long the mystery of the Church Age remained hidden is expressed next by the prepositional phrase **ἀπό, apo**, plus the noun **αἰών, aiōn**: “from the ages,” a reference to all previous dispensations.
27. This mystery was concealed by God, Who created all things. From Adam down to Pentecost the only knowledge about the Church Age were the few details Christ gave the eleven during His upper room discourse the night before His crucifixion (John 14ff).
28. The mystery of the Church and its relationship to Christ was hidden from those who lived in every previous dispensation. From the proclamation of the divine decree until Pentecost this mystery is said to have been “hidden in God.”
29. It is important to remember that the First Advent of Christ was the fulfillment of prophecies given to the Jew. We have recently noted the original prophecy of the First Advent in Genesis 3:15’s comment about the “seed of the woman.” This prophecy was fulfilled in Matthew 1:18 where Mary was “found to be with child.”
30. In Matthew 1:23, Gabriel correlates the “seed of Mary” with the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14, “Behold, a virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”
31. This prophecy takes up two extremely important doctrines: (1) the birth of the true humanity of the Messiah without benefit of human procreation thus eliminating the presence of the sin nature in the Lord’s genetic structure and (2) the two essences of the hypostatic union: (a) the essence of true humanity by means of the virgin bearing a son, and (b) the essence of deity indicated by the title Immanuel which means “God is with us.”
32. The fulfillment of the prophecy is confirmed in Matthew 1:22 which states this fact by quoting in verse 23 the passage from:
Isaiah 7:14 - “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.”
33. Not only was the birth of Messiah the “seed of the woman” but also a specific Jewish bloodline within the House of David, prophesied by Nathan in:
2 Samuel 7:12 - “When your days [**David’s**] are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish your kingdom.
v. 16 - Your house and your kingdom shall endure before me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”