

EPHESIANS 3:7-11 THE MEANING AND END OF HISTORY

The church, of which we belong to, is the most astonishing phenomenon the world has ever seen. M.L. Jones

It is more wonderful than anything seen in nature. Jones

We travel for long distances to see marvelous things such as Niagara Falls, Yellowstone National Park, Rocky Mtns. Grand Canyon, the ocean beaches and they are so thrilling to see and awe inspiring. But these things are nothing compared to the Church made up of Christians who gather together to worship. We are the most amazing thing that God has ever made. This supreme creation of God is the highest manifestation of God's handiwork. The greatest manifestation of God's wisdom is the best way He shows His wisdom to his grand creation of angels. This is staggering that God would work through us and the dignity and glory of the church that Paul talks about here goes beyond anything he has said about the Church. Nothing about the Church goes higher than this.

1. PREACHING OF THE MYSTERY 3:7-9

A. MINISTER

How can the people hear the Gospel without people who deliver it?

How can they believe, Romans 10 asks. Preachers are called to minister the good news. They are ministers or servants.

(DIAKANOS)—Servant who acts for the benefit of others

1 Cor 3:5, Col 1:23,25, Acts 26:16

Paul's biggest duty was to be a faithful servant. A mystery had been revealed to him that he might teach the Gentiles. They had been in the dark and he now was bringing them good news that they could be reconciled to God. We are all called to proclaim this wonderful news.

B. BY GOD'S GRACE

Paul was simply amazed that he was called by God to have this ministry.

1 Cor 15:10

It's always the goodness and kindness of God that He would include us in ministry to others.

C. BY GOD'S POWER

Col 1:29

It is the effectual, powerful work of God that makes us Christians and then to do His work. We are helpless and insufficient in ourselves.

D. LEAST OF ALL THE SAINTS

1 Tim 1:5

E. BRING TO LIGHT WHAT WAS HIDDEN

A part of Paul's calling was to illuminate the minds of men that they were in great darkness.

2. UNSEARCHABLE RICHES 3:10

There are many things we can talk about that are pressing such as the economy, politics, uncertainties and turbulences in the world, but what we have to preach is the unsearchable riches of Christ.

A. CHRIST HIMSELF

The Gospel is Christ, Himself. The riches are in Him. Those riches are unsearchable, untraceable. We can't fully comprehend them. We will spend eternity discovering new and fresh aspects and facets of the riches of Christ. They are inexhaustible.

Christ is our greatest need. He is our life. Our greatest ambition should be to know Him.

- B. HIS KINDNESS, FORBEARANCE, PATIENCE Rom 2:4
- C. HIS WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS, SANCTIFICATION, REDEMPTION 1 Cor 1:30
- D. HIS MERCY AND LOVE Eph 2:4
- E. HIS GLORY Eph 3:16
- F. ALL THINGS TO ENJOY 1 Tim 6:17
- G. HIS ASSURANCE Col 2:2
- H. HIS WORD Col 3:16
- I. REPROACHES FOR HIS SAKE Heb 11:26
- J. HOLY SPIRIT
- K. REST Mt 11:28
- L. PEACE John 14:27
- M. JOY John 16:24, 33
- N. ICORRUPTIBLE INHERITANCE 1 Pet 1:3-5
- O. ALL THE TREASURES Col 2:3, 2 Pet 1:3

3. ETERNAL PURPOSE OF THE MYSTERY 3:10-11

Do we know what is happening in the world. Do we know the overall purpose? Professor Arnold Toynbee says that the whole process of history is just a matter of cycles. As powers go down, then other powers arise and then another power overtakes that. That was what Toynbee espoused as the explanation of history as rise and fall, no real advance, just circles.

Historian, H.A. L. Fisher said that after studying history, there was no purpose was found in history.

The Victorian Age had a false optimism in that the world was advancing and developing, and progressing quite inevitably. The 20th century would bring great scientific knowledge, secular knowledge, and education and culture. The Bible was only ethical but it was not supernatural.

But without the Gospel, there is no hope. The Bible has one great theme. It is to give men an understanding of life in this world, what its about, and where it is going. There is an eternal purpose. God's plan is to redeem this world and restore it to perfection.

James Boice—Paul turns to the Church as the focal point of world history. This is the point upon which God's purpose is focused. Eph 3:10-11

God uses insignificant people called saints who are unknown to the world, but well known by Him. What an empire this is. This is a great reality Paul holds before our gaze.

A. MANIFOLD WISDOM---Multi-colored, multi-faceted, The light broken up in various colors of the spectrum, varieties

The supreme purpose of the church is to glorify God by manifesting His wisdom before the angels.

The church breaks up the whiteness like a prism does white light into colors of the spectrum. What a glory the angels see by this.

B. THE ANGELS

Eph 1:21, Col 1:16

What is happening in the church is so stupendous and amazing and glorious that even the glorious angels who have spent their whole time in the presence of God, even they are staggered and amazed at what they see in and through the Church. It surpasses even their knowledge.

They have observed a whole history of man. Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Esau, the children of Israel in the wilderness, in canaan, in Babylon, It is through the Gospel they have seen the greatest wisdom of God through the Church.

They never imagined that the second person of the Trinity would would humble Himself and be born as a babe in Bethlehem, and then live in this world and then at the Cross.

The angels are the audience, we are the actors, and Satan tries to resist God's purposes.

C. SALVATION, THE GREATEST MANIFESTATION

God accomplishes His purpose through salvation. He accomplishes His purpose by means of a new creation.

1 Pet 1:12, Luke 15:10

We are the players in this drama

D. THE CHURCH IS THE MEDIUM OF THE MANIFESTATION

The most astonishing phenomenon the world has ever seen

The portrayal of the Church is higher than anything that God has done.

Are the angels seeing you as you play out your part and speak your lines?

Do they see it in you? It is where you work, live, play, and think and speak.