

Ephesians 3:1-12 What on earth are we here for?

I want us to consider the following question this morning. What on earth are we here for? And when I say “we” I mean the church. What on earth is the church here for?

1. The church was formed by Jesus Christ. He said “I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”
2. The church exists for Jesus Christ. We are his bride!
3. The church can only be removed by Jesus Christ. The gates of hell will not prevail against it, but Jesus threatens to remove the church at Ephesus in Revelation 3.

If the church was formed by Christ, exists for Christ, and can only be removed by Christ then we need to make sure that we find and fulfill Christ’s purpose for the church. We can get a host of opinions and ideas about what the church is here for.....and we do.....

But what does Jesus say? What is His purpose for the church. What on earth are we here for?

READ/PRAY

What on earth are we here for? From this passage of Scripture we learn that we have a very clear, undeniable purpose for existing. It is spelled out for us specifically in verse 10.

10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

So, what on earth are we here for? In short: “**We exist to make known to the spiritual powers the manifold wisdom of God.**” Look with me at our text. We see 3 points of progression.

1. **This wisdom is revealed to Paul through direct revelation: v 1-7**

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- 2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. 4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

Romans 16:25-26 *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, 26 but now is manifested*

What is this mystery or wisdom of God?

6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, 7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

- a. The Gentiles...the nations...are fellow heirs! Jewish brothers are one thing, but Gentiles?
- b. Fellow members of the body...full members...not outliers?
- c. Fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

2. This wisdom is revealed to the church through Paul: v 8-9

To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things

a. Acts 26:12-20

b. Colossians 1:24-28 *Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. 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, 26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, 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 hope of glory. 28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.*

3. This wisdom is revealed to the rulers and authorities through the church: v 10

10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities

a. Who are these rulers and authorities?

1. Ephesians 2:1-2

2. Ephesians 6:10-13

3. They are spiritual and supernatural rulers and authorities...in the heavenly places...the spiritual realm.

If we put all of this together, here is what we find: **God intentionally revealed to Paul the mystery of the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ; that Gentiles can be fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise of Christ SO THAT Paul could bring that message to the Gentiles SO THAT the church made up of every nation, tongue, and tribe can make devils aware of the mighty power of the gospel!**

This is Christ's purpose for His church! v11

11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

What on earth are we here for?

1. To serve the community?

2. To help people feel better about themselves?

4. To organize worship services, plan events, and develop programs.

5. To meet MY needs...and wants

According to Ephesians 3 it is something much bigger than that!

1. We are on earth to make known to the spiritual powers the manifold wisdom of God.
2. That Jesus Christ came to make people like us HIS fellow heirs, fellow members of HIS body, and fellow partakers of HIS gospel.
3. It is almost as though the church exists to proclaim over and over to Satan and his hosts of demons....
 - a. Look at what Christ has done among the nations!
 - b. Look at what Christ is doing to the ends of the earth!
 - c. Look out for what Christ is going to do...because we know how it all ends!
 - d. The age ends by the manifold wisdom of God being displayed in the heavenly realm

as a great multitude which no one can count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands; crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9-10

In a sense, we are on earth so that we may boast of Christ over and over to the devil and His demons.

1. Think about this. Christ is here walking among the lampstands! Fallen Angels are here!
2. How does that change your view of the church?
3. We get to exalt Christ and shame Satan. That's our purpose!
4. Or we can get wrapped up in 1000 other things and make Christ secondary.
5. Colossians 1:18 *He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.*

Let us fulfill the purpose that He has left us here to fulfill.

1. Let us live blameless, holy, and serious lives so that the spiritual realm will see and recognize that the powerful work of Christ's gospel will prevail.
2. Let us worship passionately, fervently, and joyfully so that the spiritual realm will see and recognize that the powerful work of Christ's gospel is prevailing.
3. Let us pray desperately, faithfully, and hopefully so that the spiritual realm will see and recognize that the powerful work of Christ's gospel will not fail.
4. Let us give sacrificially, generously, cheerfully so that the spiritual realm will see and recognize that the powerful work of Christ's gospel will not fail, but will prevail.
5. Let us go in such a way...aggressively, urgently, and with reckless abandon...so that the spiritual realm will see and recognize that the powerful work of Christ's gospel will not fail, but will prevail.