The Eternal Purpose Of The Church

Robert Harkrider · Ephesians 3:8–12

INTRODUCTION

- In Ephesians chapter 1, we began in a recent lesson talking about the prayer that the Apostle Paul uttered for these saints and brethren that were at Ephesus.
- I would think that it is a prayer that certainly is effective even for Christians today.

1 That the Eyes of Your Understanding Be Enlightened

Ephesians 1:18

- Particularly, I wanted to emphasize verse 18, where his prayer was that the eyes of your understanding would be enlightened.
- I believe involved in that is knowing more than just the facts.
- But are our eyes really enlightened to the full understanding that we would thrill at the idea that we are citizens of the kingdom of God?
- But the forgiveness that's possible through his precious blood is not something to be just sort of taken for granted.

2 The Household of God, Made One in Christ

Ephesians 2

- That before and without Jesus Christ, we were without hope in this world. We were without God.
- But in Christ Jesus, the point that was made was the fact that we're part of a different family now. We're joined together. The household of God, made one in Christ.
- And as a collective body, we are the temple of the Lord, the dwelling place.
- If we truly had the eyes of our understanding enlightened, we would do our best to live as a people who bring glory unto the Lord.

3 According to God's Eternal Purpose

Ephesians 3:8–12; Ephesians 1:4

- To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose.
- And those same people believe that the church is just an afterthought of God.
- But this scripture says the church is important, so important in God's plan that it was according to his eternal purpose.
- How far back does the church and God's plan go? As far back as the Christ and his plan and purpose for redemption through the shedding of his blood.

4 Prophesied Hundreds of Years Before

Joel 2:28–32; Daniel 2:40–45; Jeremiah 31:31–34

- It shall come to pass in the last days that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.
- It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains.
- I say to you that the fulfillment of prophecy is proof that the Bible is not the work of men.
- In the days of the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire, God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed.

5 My Kingdom Is Not of This World

John 18:36; Luke 17:20–21

- God's plan is not something that just happened as an afterthought because the world was too wicked for the kingdom to be established.
- My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.
- It is a spiritual kingdom of which we are citizens. We're made citizens, though, Jesus said, by being born again.
- As one is baptized into Jesus Christ, so he is added also into the family of God, which is the church.

6 The Kingdom Came With Power on Pentecost

Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1–4

- There's some who are standing here, who will not taste the death till they see the kingdom of God come with power.
- If we can understand when the power came, we know when the kingdom came.
- We understand that the church which is called the kingdom of God was established on that very day, on Pentecost.
- Indeed, the church began when the gospel was preached, and men and women who believed repented of their sins and were baptized on that day.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **You and I are a privileged people. Let's not take it for granted.**

MY NOTES