

The Church; The Plan

10-4-26

Ephesians 3:9–10 (ESV)

We preach the unsearchable riches of Christ bringing to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through The Church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

We look at this world, current events and can become very discouraged. Imagine looking at this world through God's eyes. HIS disappointment and grief are revealed in Scripture. God's solution is Jesus Christ and the church. The book of Ephesians focuses on the church as an entity and its function in this world. Therefore, we are going to go through Ephesians to understand this Plan, this Mystery, the Church that has been hidden for ages. (Now let us not get wrapped up in the doctrines of Election and Freewill. Let us put these aside for the time being and just observe God's recorded history.) God says that the Mystery, the Plan, the Church will reveal the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places meaning angels. The Plan not only includes us but also reveal the wisdom of God to the angels.

In 1Peter 1:12, it literally says that the angels intently stoop over and look at these things. In our study of the church, we need to be aware of the observation of angels. Let us go back to creation.

Notice what God asked Job:

Job 38:4–7 (ESV) NO/OH

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth; when the morning stars (angels) sang together and all the sons of God (angels) shouted for joy?

At creation all the angels rejoiced together; Satan hadn't fallen and Adam and Eve hadn't sinned.

However, Satan did fall taking a third of the angels with him, plus Adam and Eve did sin. Things went downhill from there. Over the years the population soared, and mankind rejected God and was consumed with wickedness. At this time the angels having chosen sides, good and evil, were present observing all God's actions toward mankind.

Genesis 6:5–6 (ESV)

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.

Then God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” With Noah God started over. Yet here we are, 2026, heading the same direction as before the flood. But now God who created all things has a different the plan for mankind, the mystery hidden for ages, the church. Through Jesus, who also was present at creation, the church which includes BCC now reveals the manifold wisdom of God. Manifold literally means “very varied.” Used for multicolored cloth. We at BCC are very varied. Through Christ, the church is God’s plan established for all eternity.

Colossians 1:17–18 (ESV)

Jesus is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And Jesus is the head of the body, The Church.

The mystery, the church is God’s plan. The Bible refers to individual congregations as churches. Each assembly is fulfilling God’s intended plan on earth.

Ephesians 2:22 (ESV)

In Christ you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Now I have great respect for the mega churches that God is using to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. But the first churches were much smaller.

1 Corinthians 16:19 (ESV)

Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in **their house**, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.

For this corrupt world, God's answer, God's plan, is the Church, which at the time were smaller house churches. So, we could say, God's answer is BCC. Therefore, BCC is revealing God's mystery fulfilling God's plan and the angels are totally fascinated by this manifold wisdom of God. The good and evil are fascinated! Therefore, we know:

Ephesians 6:12 (ESV) NO/OH

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

As a dwelling place for God by the Spirit, God meets with the congregation and covers it with HIS power. There is power and protection within the church. Note the dynamic within the church.

1 Corinthians 5:4–5 (ESV)

⁴ When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵ you are to deliver this sinful man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

When the church assembles, God covers it and the power of Jesus is present. Satan is outside the church. This sinful man was living under the protection of the church but being unrepentant he was removed from that protection put back into Satan's sphere of influence. Therefore:

Hebrews 10:24–25 (ESV)

Do not neglect meeting together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see bad things happening.

It makes a difference when you meet as a church.

The church offers us powerful spiritual protection.

There is a spiritual covering over a church body which Satan cannot penetrate. Plus, we hear the truth of God in the church that helps us battle the lies of the world. We are encouraged by truth and by the fellowship of other believers.

In the church we are exposed to a different kingdom. As a church, we gather in power, in worship, in prayer. The angels are fascinated as they observe members of the church forgive one another and love one another. **Through love and forgiveness, the church is indestructible.** We will spend the next few weeks studying Ephesians understanding God's mystery, God's plan, The Church.

As members of the church, we believe:

Ephesians 2:8–9 (ESV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith.

And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.