

THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD

Ephesians 3:7-10: For the Sake of Christ, His Church & the Nations 3

In Paul's message of encouragement to the Ephesian church, we learn three compelling reasons why we should never lose heart in the midst of suffering and opposition to the gospel. We must not lose heart because: (1) God's salvation plan for His church is being fulfilled (3:1-6); (2) God's manifold wisdom is being displayed (3:7-10); and (3) God's chosen people from all nations are being saved (3:11-13). In light of these reasons, we must then live our lives for the sake of Christ, His church and the nations. Our passage for consideration presents two significant ways by which God displays His manifold wisdom through the church.

2. God's manifold wisdom is being displayed through:

a. *The Proclamation of the _____ by _____*

As Paul reflects on how God has poured out His grace on his own life, he speaks about the immense privilege he received from God to be a minister of the gospel (Eph. 3:7-8). Paul is so conscious of his unworthiness for he could not believe that the Savior whom he once detested, rejected and opposed would call him to be His servant (1 Tim. 1:13,15; 1 Cor. 15:9). Paul further expresses his amazement at the extraordinary privilege God has given when he describes the twofold dimension of his gospel ministry: to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ to the nations and to bring to light to everyone God's plan of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 3:8-9). Paul reminds us that the gospel that we are commissioned to proclaim is not about moral rules, or religious rituals or feel-good messages. The true gospel that saves is all about the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ: that Jesus Christ who is infinitely rich in glory died on the Cross for our sins and rose again so that you and I who trust in Him alone would receive His eternal riches of salvation and everlasting life (Eph. 1:7; 2:4-5; 2 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 11:33). We are also called by God to reveal and bring to light to everyone God's plan that through Christ alone, both Jews and Gentiles could be reconciled to God and be forever united to one another as God's beloved church (Eph. 3:6,9; 4:18; 2 Cor. 4:4-7; Rev. 5:13).

b. *The Revelation of the _____ to the _____*

God also displays the glory of His manifold wisdom to the angels through the church (Eph. 3:10; 1:21; 6:12). Paul unfolds this amazing truth that the church, God's people throughout all generations, are chosen by God, saved in Christ and gathered together from all nations to show all the angels, both the holy ones and the evil ones, the greatness and the glory of God's manifold wisdom. To the holy angels, the existence of the church causes them to marvel at the wisdom of God's grace in saving sinners like you and me and uniting us forever in one body (Luke 15:10; Rev. 5:11). If the holy angels rejoice and stand in awe of God's wisdom in saving God's people, Satan and all his evil forces look in fear and trembling. Jesus' triumph on the Cross for the salvation of His church means defeat and shame for the evil one and all his hosts (Col. 2:15; Matt, 16:18). This is indeed the wonder of all wonders: God declares to all, both in heaven and on earth, "If you want to see My glory, look at My church!" (Eph. 3:21).
