



Northside Proclaimer

Proclaiming The Word Of The Lord

1 Thessalonians 1:8

Northside Church Of Christ Welcomes You!

November 16, 2014

“The Unplanned Church” Part Two

Bryan Garlock

We’re studying the doctrine of Premillennialism. If you have not read any of the previous articles in this series, I would encourage you do so.

God does not act arbitrarily as some would assume. In other words, all things work for the glorification of our Holy Father. He has eternally purposed certain accomplishments to take place in view of our salvation. Happenings that are eternal past, present and future.

For instance, when the Jews questioned Jesus' statement about Abraham’s rejoicing of seeing Jesus, they scoffed, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” Jesus replied, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am” (John 8.56-58). Jesus is eternal past, present and future.

Paul showed that Christ’s birth was eternally purposed. From eternal past, God’s plan was for Christ to come and be His sacrifice for us. God’s plan began to unfold from the time of the introduction of sin into the world (Gen. 3.1-16). Paul penned, “...when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law” (Gal. 4.4). God knew before creation that His Son would be made flesh to dwell among us. If the time was not full, then God did not know it and sent His Son prematurely or late. Therefore, the sending of His Son was at precisely the right time to fulfill His eternal purpose in Christ.

Further, Christ’s death on the cross was eternally purposed. Peter preached to a crowd of murderers, “this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men” (Acts 2.23). God did not act arbitrarily; this event was in the mind of God from eternity past. Indeed, Christ's redemptive work, “was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you” (1 Peter 1.20). *Continued on back...*

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Announcements

- Sister Sharon lost her home to a fire. Please contact her to find out what she needs and pray for her family
- Remember John Blair
- Remember the shut in's.
- Pray for the church and one another.
- Men's Bible today, Dec. 14th 3:30 PM
- Teen's Bible study / Kid's drill today
- Call or email me to add announcements, thanks.
- Bible study this Tuesday 7 PM; Bryan Garlock's house; ask Bryan Garlock for details
- Coming soon: Young family / couples' Bible study (1st of year)
- Remember the spiritual sick among us

After Pentecost (when the church began), those being saved through Christ were done so by "His own purpose and grace...before the ages began" (2 Tim. 1.8-9). This confirms what Paul wrote to Titus, "...eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began" (1.2).

Now that we understand the meaning of the eternal purpose of God, if it be so true that the church Christ built was "plan B," "unexpected," and "an accident," we should not find any prophecies, promises or better yet, passages teaching the eternal purpose of the Lord's church.

The Holy Spirit by the pen of Paul revealed, "so that through the **church** the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. **This was according to the eternal purpose** that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3.10-11, emphasis added). Well that settles it!

In His Ephesians epistle, Paul writes of the revelation of the mystery of Christ that had been hidden from other generations. "This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (3.6).

This mystery, and the manifold wisdom of God, was made known to angels through witnessing His accomplishments in the church. Peter adds, concerning our salvation, "...things into which angels long to look" (1 Peter 1.12). These perplexed angels finally understood the manifold wisdom of God when about 3,000 souls came to Christ on the day of Pentecost. Christ's redemptive work had come to fruition.

Another point worth mentioning is Christ is the savior of His church (Eph. 5.23). When one is baptized into Christ (Gal. 3.26-27), they are also baptized into His body (1 Cor. 12.13; Acts 2.47). Therefore, to be in Christ is to be in His body also, which is the church (cf. Col. 1.18). Since there is no condemnation in Christ (Rom. 8.1), there is no condemnation in the church (Eph. 5.23). If then our salvation was to be found in Christ before the world began, then the church was always in God's plan!

Finally, the Scriptures teach that Christ shed His blood to purchase the church of God (Acts 20.28). This eternally-purposed church could not be established until the shedding of that blood. Hence, the church was not established until after the death of Jesus. When one realizes that Christ went to the cross for the church that He planned to establish from eternal past, then he understands that all those who belittle the church today do not appreciate God's eternal purpose and plan. As a blood-bought church purchased by Christ, He is placed in a position to be our head and our Savior (Eph. 5.23). Therefore, we must be in the church to be saved.

While standing before His disciples, Christ promised to establish His church, which He built on Pentecost (Matt. 16.18; Acts 2.47). Since the church is the people and vice versa, Christ did not establish the church then save about 3,000 nor did He save about 3,000 then establish the church to put them in it. When they were saved the church was established. Those who understand this simple truth understand the church to be eternally purposed and executed by Christ.

Last week, we studied what the Scriptures taught concerning the church of Christ and how God paints it as a beautiful masterpiece from heaven. This is so because God is glorified in the church and in Christ Jesus (Eph. 3.20-21). Next week we will notice that the church and the kingdom are the same thing in Scripture.

If the church was unplanned, we serve a failed savior. Our faith is in vain. We have no hope. The New Testament writers wasted their ink writing anything about the church. How can the Son of God fail to set up His kingdom and instead set up the church and then expect us to not forsake His assembly? BG