

The Importance of the church

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Introduction

1. Ephesians 3:8-11
2. The purpose or plan of God is developed and accomplished in the church.
3. Before the world began God had a plan. Ephesians 1:4
4. Then through the ages of man's history God has unfolded His plan.
5. "Manifold" means multi-colored, much variegated. Infinite diversity, breath-taking beauty.
6. This was all done in Christ Jesus. Vs 11
 - a. This points to the One who is the center and circumference of all things.
 - b. The eternal purpose was conceived and made in the mind of God.
 - c. Attaining its fulfillment is only through Him, in the church.
 - d. The church then is most important! Salvation is only in the church and thus a crucial part of God's purpose.
7. What can we understand the importance of the church?

II Discussion

1. By noticing She was planned from the beginning
 - a. Genesis 3:15 First hint of a Savior and the church 4000 BC
 - b. Genesis 12:1-3 God's promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed 1900 BC cf. Galatians 3:15ff
 - c. Isaiah 2:2-3 Isaiah's prophetic words were given 750 BC
 - d. Daniel 2: 44 Daniel speaks of the kingdom Given 600 BC
 - e. Matthew 3:1-3 John, the forerunner talks of the near future of the kingdom. About 4 year to Pentecost
 - f. Mark 1:14-15 Jesus is preaching the kingdom is at hand. About 3 years to Pentecost. (Cf. Matthew 14:3-12)
 - g. Matthew 16:18 Jesus preaches, "I will build my church." This is about 1 year to Pentecost
 - h. Mark 9:1 Jesus proclaims some would not die till the kingdom came. This is just a few months before Pentecost
 - i. Would God give 4,000+ years to unfold something that was not important?
2. By noticing Her foundation.
 - a. There is only one foundation 1 Corinthians 3:11
 - b. Notice the corner stone. Isaiah 28:16; Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-7
 - c. This is a sure foundation. 2 Timothy 2:19; Matthew 16:13-18; Matthew 7:24-27
3. By noticing Her purchased price.
 - a. This truly shows her value. 2 Corinthians 9:15
 - b. She was bought with the blood of Christ Acts 20:28
 - c. She was redeemed with the precious blood of Christ 1 Peter 1:18-19
 - d. Christ gave himself for the church. Ephesians 5:25

III Conclusion

1. What do you think of the church?
2. It is important to God, is it important to you?
3. God planed the church; He laid the foundation for the church and He purchased the church therefore it is important to Him
4. Are you a part of this most important institution?

Sources: Fundamental Facts of the Faith: The eternal purpose of Jehovah God by Paul Sain;
New Testament church by Roy E. Cogdill. Center column in a reference Bible.