

Ephesians 3:10

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If you want to see the love of God, look to the cross. If you want to see the power of God, look to the resurrection. If you want to see the humility of God, look to the Incarnation, if you want to see the majesty of God, look to the creation. But if you want to see the wisdom of God, look to the church

Paul says, I'm preaching the unsearchable reach riches of Christ, I want to bring to life for everyone. What is the plan? What is the stewardship of the mystery that has been hidden in God who created all things and so all things serve His plan, but it's now been revealed. Now, verse 10, so that here's the purpose, so that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God, might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. That is verse 10. Wow, verse 10, is an incredible verse. Verse 10, really has a lot to say to us. So let's think, let's think carefully through verse 10. So so that here's the point, here's the purpose. Paul says, I'm preaching the unsearchable riches of God, the mystery has been revealed. And so now I'm trying to bring delight to everyone. What is the stewardship of this mystery or the plan this mystery, so that, so that here's the point, that the church, through the church might be made known to the rulers and authorities, what is the manifold wisdom of God? So first, that word manifold wisdom of God, the manifold wisdom of God manifold just means many varied, or having multiple sources think about like a manifold on a motor or something like that, as has different varied sources. So manifold is, is many colored, or many faceted, the many facts multifaceted wisdom of God. Paul says, the purpose is that through the church, this multifaceted multi component, multi sided wisdom of God would be made known. So I think that verse 10, is inviting us to think of this as like a play. You remember back, maybe in high school, you might take drama, in high school, anything you were in a play. So remember, you watch this play, or maybe you've gone to a play. And there's three things that a play has to have in order to be a play. If it's missing any of these things, you don't have a play. So a play needs. First of all, it needs actors. No actors, no play. So you need actors. Secondly, you also need a play, you need a script, right. And thirdly, you need spectators, if you don't have all three of those, you don't have a plot. If you've got actors, and no script and spectators, then you just have a just a big chaos. If you've got a script, and actors, but no spectators, then you got to dress rehearsal, you need all three of those to have a play. And so what Paul is describing in verse 10, is a this grand play this grand demonstration. So there is a demonstration being made. And there are actors in that demonstration. And there are spectators in that demonstration. So first of all, it's talking about the actors, the actors in the play, pulses is through the church. Now that word is ecclesia, we're probably familiar with that word, it literally means called out ones, the church the called out ones, we are brothers and sisters, we are the called out ones, we are to be called out, we are not here to make this world our own. We are the ones that this world is not our home, we are called out of this world. So these are the actors that called out ones. God has these called out ones the new humanity. And he says to us, this is this is the actors that the through the church, the church are these are the ones that will put on the play. So then the acting that were the actors that we talked about. Now let's talk about the playlist. Let's see what the play is the play is, or the script is maybe we could say it that way. The wisdom of God. God seeks to put on display his wisdom, specifically his manifold wisdom. And the way that he's going to do that is through the church. So if you want to see the love of God,

look to the cross. The cross is where you see the God's love. If you want to see the power of God, look to the resurrection. That's what shows us the power of God. If you want to see the humility of God, look to the incarnation. If you want to see the holiness of God, look to the law. If you want to see the majesty of God look to the creation. But if you want to see the wisdom of God Look to the church, because the church pulses right here first in the church is the display, the play the acting, the showing of the manifold wisdom of God. So when we want to see how wise God is, look to the church. That's what Paul's saying to us. If you want to see if you want to grasp the love of God, the cross shows you that the power of God, the empty tomb shows you that the holiness of God, the 10 commandments show you that the wisdom of God, the wildness of God, the church shows you that the new humanity shows you that those who were once enemies who are now brothers, and CO heirs of the kingdom, that's what shows you the wisdom of God. So that's the actors and that's the play. The actors are the church, the called out ones, the play is the wisdom of God. We are here to demonstrate to show what is the wisdom of God. So now let's Lastly, look at who the spectators are. The spectators Paul says that through the wisdom of the church, the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, rulers and authorities. So that phrasing there, those two words show up actually all over the New Testament there. Multitudes of places where they show up, sometimes they mean just basically the straightforward earthly rulers and authority. Sometimes they mean temple rulers and authorities. Places like Luke 12, verse 11, or second, First Corinthians two verse eight, or Titus chapter three, verse one just mentions these rulers and authorities, same word, same phrasing, and it means in some type of earthly ruler and authority. However, we know very clearly that Paul's not speaking here that the church is displaying to earthly rulers and authorities, the wisdom of God, because Paul says rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, so that that word, their heavenly places, we talked about this before Paul uses it, I think about four times in Ephesians. Remember, it's the adjective without a now heavenly literally in the heavenlies. So use it again here. And that's clearly saying to us that Paul's not talking about the wisdom of God is revealed to earthly rulers and authorities through the church, although it is, I mean, we know this to be true, we know that the world is watching us. And we know that if we want to display as Paul saying, hear the wisdom of God that the world is watching us to see that right. So we take that for granted. But that's not what Paul's talking about here. what Paul's saying here is the spectators are rulers and authorities that are non human, that are angelic beings, or supernatural beings, supernatural rulers, and supernatural authorities. We know that because he uses this word heavenlies. But we also know that because Paul uses the same phrase, three other times in the same book four times in Ephesians. Paul uses the same phrasing, rulers and authorities. Let's just take a quick look at where those come. The first one comes in chapter one, verse 20, so that he worked in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated him at the right hand of the heavenly heavenly places far above, and here it is all rule and authority. So same phrasing there. And clearly there Paul is talking about a supernatural type of being a supernatural realm shows up again, chapter two, verse two, here's a little bit harder to see verse two says, following the prince of the power of the air, so it's here in the English Standard translated Pete, Prince and power, but it's the same words, ruler authority, sent to words, and then shows up finally, in chapter six and verse 12, I believe it is chapter six and verse 12. but against the rulers and the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness. So in that context, clearly, we see there Paul is talking about supernatural beings. So Paul's point here is that the church is the actors in this grand play of God, to demonstrate his wisdom to the watching supernatural beings. So pause right here.

Wow. We're on display. God is putting us on display. Not just for other humans. God is putting us on display for the supernatural realm. The supernatural realm is watching the church. The supernatural realm has its attention fixated upon the church and all of this is serving a purpose. So the next question I want to ask and try to answer is what kind of supernatural beings is Paul talking about? What sort of supernatural rulers and authorities is he talking about bad ones or he's talking about good ones? Because we know that we talked about angelic beings. There are angelic beings that are the faithful perfect servants of God. And there are angelic beings who are what we call fallen angelic beings who are evil, demonic rulers and authorities. So which is Paul talking about? He doesn't say. And there's no way to know for certain, I think though, it's probably likely that Paul is referring to the fallen ones. Because the three other times that he uses the same words, he's talking there about fallen, evil, angelic beings, demonic angelic beings. So he probably has in mind that the church is displaying to the fallen demonic, angelic beings, the wisdom of God. So think about this kind of blows your mind, doesn't it. God created all things good. And he created all angelic beings, and created them good. In your notes, Colossians chapter one, verse 16, four by Him, all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things are created through Him. And for him. So all things, Paul clearly says they're on earth or above the earth. And they're all created not only by him, but for him. So God created all the angelic beings, and he created them good. At some point, a portion of them chose to rebel. And we don't know when that was, Scripture doesn't tell that to us. My, my guess would probably be that that took place sometime between the creation of the world and the fall of man, but that's just a guess. It could have taken place before the creation of anything. But at some point, a portion of the angelic beings that God created, chose to rebel against him. In other words, they said to God, we're wiser than you. We know better than you. We will choose our own way.

And God says, Okay, that's my plan. I am going to redeem a people. I'm going to redeem a people who hated me. And I'm going to take those people who hated each other, and I'm going to make them one.

And I'm going to use that people to show you what a fool you are. They sort of give you chills up your arm, that that is part of God's plan. Now, this isn't a major doctrine in Scripture. This is the only place that scripture really talks about this thing. So this is not a major doctrine. But nonetheless, isn't that clear that this is what Paul's saying? That God in His wisdom, wishes to show the foolish, rebellious demons. What a fool they were. He says, here's, here's how I'll do it. I'll take people. And I'll make them mine. I'll rescue them. I love them. Even though they hated me. I will pay for their sin, I will do what they couldn't do, I will become their sin for them. And I will redeem them from the pit of their lostness. And there's hopelessness condition and their sinfulness. And I will make them co heirs with my son. And I will put within them a real and true and genuine love not just for me, but for one another. And I will cause them to sacrifice themselves for one another. And I'll do all this. And by so doing, I'm going to show those demons. Just how stupid you were

to rebel against me. The church is the most undervalued institution known to man. So this is in some real way. I think what God is doing with the church, using us as this demonstration against the Fallen demons, who would arrogantly flip their thumbs at God and say, we don't we we want no part of you. We're smarter than you. We're wiser than you. And then God uses us to show them just the opposite. But we said just a moment ago, it's not really clear if Paul's talking about the Fallen demonic beings or the unfallen, the good angels so to speak. And I think the poll is likely that In his mind, he possibly

means both. And the reason I say that is because the Scriptures do lead us to understand that there are things that the good angels, the unfallen, angels are watching the church for that we also are a play, so to speak, for the unfallen angels. So there's three things, at least three things in our scriptures that the Scriptures teach us. This is what the angelic world is watching the church to see. So we know from First Peter chapter one, verse 12, that the angelic world is watching the church, it was revealed to them that they were serving you through those who preach the good news, the good news of the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. So this good news, this gospel, the angels long to look into it. Why? Because this is the gospel of the new humanity, the new humanity in which enemies were made brothers and sisters, and the angels know nothing of that, because their enemies are still their enemies, their enemies are the fallen angels, they know nothing about a new humanity and Christ. So they long to look into this. So that tells us right there that the angelic realm is attentive to the church, we are the focus of attention for the angelic world. So what are they looking to see? What are they gathering from watching the church. And again, Scripture doesn't make a major issue out of this. But there are three occasions that I'm aware of, and which we are told, almost in passing, that we're told that we are the object to which the angels are looking in order to see a specific thing. The first thing comes to us in Luke chapter 15, verse 10, just so I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents. So the context there tells us that's not speaking of a child of God, who has committed sin and repent of that sin and turns from it. This is speaking of a turning from sin, and a receiving of new life. So what this says to us is that when one is added to the church, the angels are watching. And the angels see that and it causes them joy, they have a party over they say they have a celebration, because one has been added to the people of God. So angels, the angelic realm, we can assume that they see things with supernatural eyes, because they are spiritual beings, they have no body, although they can manifest themselves at times like that. But we would assume that they see things with spiritual type eyes. So what that's not saying is that the angels are watching one group or one one local congregation. And when one is add to their number, the angels go yay. Instead, I think it's saying that the angels see the true Church of God. They see on Earth, those who are the true Church, and when one is added to their number. The angels see that, and it causes them joy. And it's reason for celebration. So they see when one has believed and repented and received new life in Christ, and it brings them joy. Secondly, take a look at First Corinthians 11, verse nine and 10. Neither was man created for a woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head. So first Corinthians chapter 11. We just stepped in, then we, because first Corinthians 11 is talking about an issue that the Bible teaches to us. That is probably the most distasteful issue of Scripture today. And that is what the Scripture teaches about biblical submission, biblical submission in the church, biblical submission in the home. So the topic or the truth of biblical submission is something that we find extraordinarily distasteful today, because largely because we misunderstand it, largely because we don't perceive it correctly, largely because we miss characterize it, and largely because we've seen it badly done. But the biblical doctrine of submission, submission, both in the church and submission in the home, is the opposite of all of that. There's nothing degrading, humiliating or debasing about it at all. In fact, it is glorifying. But suffice to say, we don't have time for that topic today. It's a topic that has to be treated with sensitivity, and care. And we'll have plenty of time when we get to Ephesians five, which is where Paul talks all about that. So if we can, we'll just sort of put that off for now just saying, okay, Paul's talking about the topic of submission. And this topic of submission, we're going to get to it in a couple chapters. And it is not something that the world characterizes as we've seen it done, or we've seen it lived out. Instead, it is

something that is exalting exhilarating glorifying for God's people. All. But nonetheless, that's what Paul's talking about here. And so what he's referencing here is some type of article of clothing that was common in the day, some way of dress that was common in the day that eat that showed one's willingness to enter into the norms of submission within the church. And so we don't know what the clothing exactly was or what it really looked like. But what Paul is referencing here is some way that that people in the Corinthian church could rebel through clothing, you know, that you can do that. You know, it's very possible to rebel through how you dress, you can Rican rebel, you can dress rebelliously, you don't talk about how you can choose certain clothing. And this applies to all cultures at all times, you can choose certain ways of dress that are rebellious in nature. And so what Paul is saying is he's referencing this certain way, again, we don't know exactly what it was, but the certain way that you could read, you could dress rebelliously. And Paul saying,

when you don't do that, the angels are watching. So that's the point I wanted to get to the whole, we had to sort of touch on the submission. But the point we're really getting to is the Paul saying, when the church lives in submission, you and we, and we know that there again, there's submission in the home, there's submission, the church, but ultimately, the ultimate submission, other than to Jesus Christ is to one another Philippians, two, three, and four, let each one of you consider others more significant than yourself. Look, not only to your own interests, but the interests of others. And so that's the ultimate submission in an earthly realm. And so when Paul's saying is when the church lives like that,

the angels take notice. And they see that. And I say, what a wise God. What a wise God, who has taken a people who were rebels. And he has given them a heart of submission. So that they joyfully submit to one another. Not begrudgingly not because they have to, but they joyfully do this. The angels say that and they say, What a wise God, to make people to take people who were rebels,

and make this from them. Isn't that stunning? That we are the object of such attention, that we are the cause for the angels praising God. You know, the angels, the unfallen, angels, the good angels, praise God, and when they do that perfectly, right. But this is saying to us that we the way that we live our life in the church, we can give the angels more cause to praise God. And so that the angels watch what we do and how we live, and how we are the church and how we are one in Christ, and I say, wise God we serve. Now the third area that we see this is in First Timothy, chapter five, verse 21, I should have put a little bit more context, in your notes, I should have put verse 22, and 23. But the context of these verses is the discipline of an elder who has sinned, an elder of the church who has fallen into sin, and repented of that sin, nonetheless, as an elder than Paul's teaching, that there is a measure of discipline that has to take place. So Paul says here to Timothy, he says, in the presence of God and Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I charge you to keep these rules without prejudicing In other words, do this Timothy, when an elder needs to be disciplined, do it in a loving, righteous, Godly manner. Why? Because the angels are watching. Now, that doesn't mean that the angels are watching in judgment. Because Paul tells the Corinthians is the other way around, where the judge of the angel is not the other way around, would put but what Paul is saying is when you have to do this really difficult work in the church, do it with love and grace, and do it with a with of devotion to righteousness so that the angels would see that and they're say, what a wise God. What a wise God who has made such a people who has made such a new humanity is that what a wise God, so that should be I think, something that will cause us as the church to say what what am God has made a new humanity that uses this new new humanity in such a

way not just here on Earth, but uses the new humanity in order to give cause for praise among his unfallen angels, and cause the fallen angels to say, what fools we were. what fools we were to ever doubt the wisdom of God