



"THROUGH THE CHURCH, THE WISDOM OF GOD MIGHT BE MADE KNOWN"

EPHESIANS 3:7-13

The glory of the Church of Jesus Christ;

MATTHEW 16:18

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock *I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

MATTHEW 18:16-20

¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector...¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ *For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.*"

God's pattern of using the least-likely and most humanly unqualified;

1 CORINTHIANS 1:27

But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7

But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

The 'unsearchable' riches of Christ;

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

And my God will supply every need of yours *according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.* *God's eternal plan: Human history can only be properly understood through the lens of the kingdom of God;*

MATTHEW 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* ¹⁹ *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

MATTHEW 12:22-29

²² Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw...²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, *"It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons."* ²⁵ Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, *"Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. ²⁶ And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?...²⁸ But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.*

Is Satan bound or free?;

1 PETER 5:8-9

Be sober-minded; be watchful. *Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* Resist him, firm in your faith...

The display of the wisdom of God: the actors, the play, and the spectators;

The spectators; earthly rulers or supernatural beings?

COLOSSIANS 1:16 (see; Titus 3:1, 1 Corinthians 2:8, Luke 12:11, etc.)

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

Are they good or bad angels?;

HEBREWS 1:14 (see; 1:20-21, 2:2, and 6:12)

Are they not all *ministering spirits* sent out to serve *for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation*?

1 CORINTHIANS 6:2-3

...Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!

Three ways that the supernatural beings are watchful of the Church;

1 PETER 1:12

It was revealed to them that they were serving...you...through those who preached *the good news* to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, *things into which angels long to look*.

LUKE 15:10

Just so, I tell you, *there is joy before the angels of God* over one sinner who repents.

1 CORINTHIANS 11:9-10

Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, *because of the angels*.

1 TIMOTHY 5:21

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus *and of the elect angels* I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.

The confident boldness of our access to God;

HEBREWS 10:19-24

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, *since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,* ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² *let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.* ²³ *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.* ²⁴ *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works...*

MARK 15:38

And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

JOHN 14:6

Jesus said to him, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me..."*

JOHN 10:9

I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

Questions for Midweek

Reflect upon the importance of the Church to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and upon their love for the Church. Paul's larger point is that the supernatural oneness and the high position of the Church should, among other things, create within us a confidence in the Father's acceptance of us (access), as well as peace in the face of the suffering of loved ones.

How important is it for the Christian to take the nature of the Church seriously? What are some ways we can do that? What are some ways in which we give the Church too little thought, or hold too low of a view of her?

Paul has now spent nearly three chapters without drifting far from the *richness of our blessings and privileges in Christ*.

In light of this, does the Church spend sufficient or insufficient time thinking, teaching, meditating upon, and thanking/praising God for the richness of these supernatural riches?

How does the truth that Satan is bound right now affect your outlook of the world around you, current events, and the immediate future of the Church? In what ways can we live as though Satan is not bound right now?

The metaphor of a Play—with the Church as the actors and the spectators are supernatural beings—is not a major theme in Scripture, yet it is a powerful truth that informs us of God’s high purpose for His Church, and the eternal ramifications He has invested in His Church.

Have you before considered the watching “eyes” of the supernatural beings, particularly the unfallen angels?

How can reflection upon this truth change the Church’s attitudes about unity and oneness? Holiness of life?

Fearlessness in the face of persecution or opposition?

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