

The Church and the Manifold Wisdom of God

Eph. 3:8-10

Introduction:

- A. The manifold wisdom of God is too grand to fully comprehend. (Psa. 139:11; Rom. 11:33,34).
 - 1. Manifold means many-fold or many sided or many colored.
 - 2. Often given less importance than our own. (Cf. Isa. 55:8,9; 1 Cor. 1:22,23).
- B. The manifold wisdom of God is made known by the church.
 - 1. Stamped on every aspect of the church: Promise, prophecy, plan, preparation and purchase.
 - 2. Reflected by the built-in *safeguards* that God placed in the church.

Discussion:

I. There Are Safeguards Against Error and Division.

- A. Church is governed by a Perfect Head and a Perfect Law.
 - 1. Christ is head. (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - 2. Bible is its law. (Jas. 1:25; Eph. 2:20-3:5; 2 Tim. 3:16,17).
- B. Churches governed by human heads and human legislation subject to error.
 - 1. Error fosters divisions.
 - 2. Human heads swayed by prejudices and pressures — not so with Christ. (Cf. Acts 10:34,35).

II. There Are Safeguards Against Annihilation.

- A. The means of perpetuation.
 - 1. The word of God is the seed of the kingdom. (Mt. 13:19; Lk. 8:11).
 - 2. The word of God is indestructible. (Matt. 24:25; 1 Pet. 1:23-25).
 - 3. Hence, Kingdom is indestructible (Dan. 2:44).
- B. The responsibilities assigned to Christians.
 - 1. To keep themselves informed. (Acts 17:11; Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:15).
 - 2. To keep spreading the seed. (Acts 8:4; 2 Tim. 2:2)
 - 3. To edify one another. (1 Thess. 5:11).
 - 4. To assemble regularly for worship. (Heb. 10:25; Acts 20:7).
 - a. Simplicity of each item of worship makes it universally practical and relevant.
 - b. Elaborate worship of men beyond reach of many.

III. There Are Safeguards Against Obscurity.

- A. Its unique place in the world. (John 18:36; 2 Cor. 6:17,18; Phil. 2:15,16).
- B. Its unique function in the world. (1 Tim. 3:15).
 - 1. Others agencies for education, entertainment, recreation, civic needs and political.
 - 2. Only church can be pillar and ground of truth — supply spiritual needs.
- C. A church that merely parrots others agencies will lose its special place in the world.

IV. There Are Safeguards Against Wholesale Apostasy.

- A. Each local church is independent. (Acts 14:23; 20:17; 1 Pet. 5:2; Phil. 1:1).
- B. Each local church is not automatically effected by errors in others.
 - 1. If joined together, all would be affected.
 - 2. The lessons of history bear this out.

Conclusion:

- A. If we abide in these safeguards, they will work — like seat belts.
- B. If we disregard them and turn to own wisdom — church will suffer.