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.

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).
      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).
         a. Simplicity of each item of worship makes it universally practical and relevant.
         b. Elaborate worship of men beyond reach of many.
   C. A church that merely parrots others agencies will lose its special place in the world.

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.