

The Beauty of “My Church”: “The Household of God”

Focus Passage: Ephesians 3:7–21

Larger Context:

Other Passages Referenced: Acts 21:29;

Sermon Recap

Seeing the beauty of the Church as the Bride of Christ is only the beginning. Seeing that beauty calls for a response. In Christian weddings, it calls for the groom to step toward the bride, followed by a declaration of intent to remain faithful to one another for all of life. We find three responses to the beauty of Christ’s Church in Ephesians 3:

- Ensure that the assembly on Sunday forms our relational world on Monday and throughout the week.
- Remain humble, remembering there is more beauty to the Church than we are currently seeing
- Pray to see more of the Church’s beauty

Paul’s worship alongside Gentiles on Sunday transformed his relational world on Monday. When we respond to the beauty of the church by allowing the assembly on Sunday to form our approach to Monday, we put the beauty of the church on display for others. The sermon mentioned several examples of believers at the Chapel who allow what they hear and experience on Sundays to form their lives and relationships throughout the week.

Some people give up on the church assembly because they don’t think they need what they’ve seen or experienced of the Church in their lives. Others get frustrated because they do not believe the Church is achieving the level of beauty they imagine it should. Paul’s answer to both groups is that we all need to humbly admit that we have yet to see the full beauty of the Church. It is dangerously arrogant to think we know just what Christ’s Church should be like.

Paul then prays for believers to see more of the Church’s beauty. God intends for the Church to put His wisdom and glory on display, not only to the world but to the fallen and unfallen angelic beings. The Church is an essential player in God’s plan for salvation. Speaking to this essential role of the Church, John Stott states, “How dare we push to the circumference what God has placed at the center. No, we shall seek to become responsible church members, active in some local manifestation of the universal church.” When we humbly admit that we have yet to see the full beauty of the Church, we follow Paul’s example and pray to see and reveal even more of the Church’s beauty.

God not only reveals His glory through His Son Jesus. God also reveals His glory through the Church as the body of Christ.

Interpretation Helps

- Jewish people normally stood up when they prayed. In Ephesians 3:14, Paul writes, “I bow my knees before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.” In that statement, Paul is recognizing that God’s authority to name symbolizes His authority over all of life. Paul is declaring his obedience to the LORD even before he prays.

- Paul actually invents a new word by combining two words to create a word meaning, “less than the least.”

Group Gathering

Group Check-in — Care, Celebration, Encouragement (About 1/3 of meeting time)

1. Informal conversation to allow individuals to catch up with one another.
2. Ask if anyone would share how they’ve been hearing and obeying God’s direction.

Allow the Word to Speak — Be Hearers of the Word (About 1/3 of meeting time)

READ Ephesians 3:1–21

1. What from the passage or sermon was most impactful to you?
2. Were you left with any questions or confusion about the passage or sermon?
3. What is the basic content of “this gospel” (Ephesians 3:6) that Paul refers to when he says he was made a minister “according to the gift of God’s grace”?
4. What did Paul state was the purpose of God in giving him such grace?
5. According to Ephesians 3:10, how did God intend to show His manifold wisdom to the “rulers and authorities in the heavenly places”? (See Eph 1:21 for another mention of these rulers and authorities). How was that to come about?
6. Paul’s central prayer is that the believers would be “strengthened with power through His Spirit.” What were the outcomes Paul noted that resulted from this Spirit’s power?

Put the Word into Practice — Be Doers of the Word (About 1/3 of meeting time)

1. How does coming apart from the world to gather on Sunday impact how you attempt to put the beauty of the Church on display Monday and the other days of the week as you are called back into the world?
2. Would you say the Church is closer to the circumference or to the center of your life?

The Big Question: What do you sense God's Spirit saying to you and what concrete action will you take in response? Share your answer with the group or another trusted Christian and ask them to pray for you.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES: Click [here](#) for some good opportunities.

**For they had previously seen Trophimus
the Ephesian with him in the city,
and they supposed that Paul
had brought him into the temple.**

Acts 21:29

Ephesians 3:8

- **“Very least” = Less than the least**
 - ***Gr. Elachistoteros***

“If Paul tried to measure and define that grace, he would find himself like a man tracking out the confines of a lake, and discovering that it was not a lake at all but an arm of the ocean, and that he was confronted by the immeasurable sea.”

John Henry Jowett

Ephesians 3:10

- **Manifold = Gk. Polypoikilos**

Ephesians 3:10

- **Manifold = *Gk. Polypoikilos***
 - **Many Many Colored**

**“The history of the Christian church
becomes a graduate school for angels.”**

John Mackay

“How dare we push to the circumference what God has placed at the center. No, we shall seek to become responsible church members, active in some local manifestation of the universal church.”

John Stott

Respond to the beauty of the church — *Eph. 3:1-21*

- **Ensure the assembly on Sunday forms our approach to Monday — *vv.1-2***
- **Remain humble, always remembering there is more beauty to see — *vv.7-13***
- **Pray to see more beauty — *vv.14-21***

**“Lord God, we come to you now to pause,
to prepare, to still our hearts, our minds,
our souls, so that we are ready to hear from
you through your Word this morning.**

We are so grateful for this opportunity to worship You through the teaching of Your word and anticipate how You will challenge and encourage us and draw us into deeper intimacy with You through Your Word. We commit now to respond in obedience. In Jesus name, amen.”

Laurie Lee

**“and to know the love of Christ,
which passeth knowledge,
that ye might be filled
with all the fulness of God.”**

Ephesians 3:19 KJV