



- Review Part 1 – Colossians 3:1-1 – Jesus Christ is All in All
 - The most important mark of newness in the new people of this new community, called the church, is that Jesus Christ, and not self or anything else, is all and in all.
 - This means that we stop cherishing the things that separate us and cherish Jesus Christ above everything and anything else.
 - We confirm that Christ is our all by the way that we treat each another.

- Book of Ephesians Overview
 - Unlike most of Paul’s other letters, Ephesians does not address any specific errors or heresies in any particular church.
 - Rather, Paul writes “to expand the horizons of his readers, so that they might know and comprehend God’s eternal purpose and grace and come to appreciate the high goals God has for the church.
 - There are two understandings of the church in Scripture.
 - The Church Worldwide
 - This refers to the community of all true believers everywhere.
 - 10-20% of Scriptural references to the church refer to the church worldwide, including most of the references found in Ephesians.
 - The Local Church
 - This is a localized community of believers
 - The local church is a picture of the church worldwide.
 - It has local leadership and gatherings.
 - 80-90% of Scriptural references to the church refer to the local church.

One of golf’s immortal moments came when a Scotchman demonstrated the new game to President Ulysses Grant. Carefully placing the ball on the tee, he took

a mighty swing. The club hit the turf and scattered dirt all over the President's beard and surrounding vicinity, while the ball placidly waited on the tee. Again the Scotchman swung, and again he missed. Our President waited patiently through six tries and then quietly stated, "There seems to be a fair amount of exercise in the game, but I fail to see the purpose of the ball."

-- Everywhere we look in this life, there is a lot of activity, but, much like the Scotchman, most of it is missing the ball and getting nowhere.

-- The only blessed purposes are God's purposes, and, in this life, those purposes are centered in the church of Jesus Christ.

-- Main Idea: The church is God's eternal purpose in Christ.

-- Read Ephesians 1:1-14

-- Pray

1.) The church was predestined in Christ before Creation.

-- v. 4 – *"He chose us in him before the creation of the world."*

-- v. 5 – *"He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will."*

-- v. 11 – *"In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will."*

-- Scripture is completely clear about the absolute sovereignty of God.

-- Isaiah 46:10 – *"I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please."*

-- Psalms 139:16 – *"All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."*

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- There are many, many more verses that demonstrate the same clear truth that nothing transpires apart from the will of God.
- Sometimes we get so wrapped up in what we were never meant to comprehend that we miss the matchless glory of what is plainly revealed.

-- As we consider the election of the church, we are most blessed to have the same attitude as Paul, who was so worked up about God's plans that he was wrapped up in God's praise.

The church, you see, is more than just a construction of our society. It is the ambition of the Almighty, the objective of our God, and the great idea of the Great I AM... Please understand that the church of Jesus Christ is infinitely more than a mere device for good. It is the very desire of God, the determination of His grace, the demonstration of His goodness, and the design of His glory... It is God's eternal plan, Christ's exalted purpose, the Spirit's enduring project, and our everlasting promise.

Before the world was designed, God had the church in His mind, and even before Jesus came, we were one in His name. We have been gathered for God's glory, planned for His purpose, predestined for His praise, redeemed for His renown, saved for His splendor, and He is bringing us together to bring honor to His name.

-- God's two main purposes in and for the church.

a.) The church exists to bring glory and pleasure to God.

-- v. 3 – *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

-- v. 5 – *“in accordance with his pleasure and will”*

-- v. 6 – *“to the praise of his glorious grace”*

-- v. 7 – *“in accordance with the riches of God's grace”*

-- v. 9 – *“according to his good pleasure”*

-- v. 12 – *“for the praise of his glory”*

-- v. 14 – *“to the praise of his glory”*

-- Clearly, God's first purpose in the church is to demonstrate God's glory and magnify His own praise.

-- If our primary purpose is anything other than glorifying God, then we have misunderstood why we even exist.

-- Thus, anything not done for the glory of God is not a legitimate activity of the church.

b.) The church exists to exalt Jesus Christ above all things.

-- Christ is credited to 10 times in these 14 verses.

- v. 3 – *“in Christ”*
- v. 4 – *“in him”*
- v. 5 – *“through Jesus Christ”*
- v. 6 – *“in the One he loves”*
- v. 7 – *“in him,” “through his blood”*
- v. 9 – *“in Christ”*
- v. 11 – *“in him”*
- v. 12 – *“in Christ”*
- v. 13 – *“in Christ,” “in him”*
- v. 10 – *“to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.”*
- God the Father has planned and predestined the church so that Jesus Christ will be exalted above all things in all things.
 - Ephesians 1:22-23 – *“God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”*
 - The Father is most glorified when the Son is most exalted.
 - If our desire to glorify God does not exalt Jesus Christ above all, then we have misunderstood God’s glory.
 - Thus, everything we are and do as a church ought to aim to glorify God by making Jesus Christ our all in all.
- The church was predestined in Christ before Creation to bring glory and pleasure to God by exalting Christ above all.

2.) The church was purchased in Christ on the cross.

- v. 7-8 – *“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.”*
- To save His people is why Christ came.

Listen, although Jesus was clearly the greatest ever teacher of ethics, He did not come simply to impart wisdom—God had already done that through Solomon. Although Jesus was a miracle worker beyond compare, He did not come to marvel spectators—God had already provided many spectacular miracles through prophets who had come before. No, as 1 Timothy 1:15 so plainly asserts: *“Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”*

Jesus, you see, came to die for sinners and save the lost in order to redeem for Himself a community called by His name. He died that the church could live. He sacrificed His body so that we could become His body. He poured out the fullness of His mercy so that we might become the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way.

Thus, as we gather as God's people, we come together as the culmination of God's purpose in Christ. And, while God's purpose for us in Christ is not yet made complete, God has called us by His grace. He has predestined us for His glory. He has prepared our pathway through the blood of the One He loves—Jesus Christ our Lord and King. The pardon that God planned before Creation was purchased in time by the propitiation of Christ.

Therefore, membership in the church of Jesus Christ matters infinitely more than any other involvement of any other type in any other organization whatsoever. // To believe is to belong and to belong is to be blessed. Just consider the litany of blessings mentioned by Paul in this glorious passage of Scripture.

- v. 4 – We have been made holy and blameless in God's sight.
- v. 5 – We have been adopted into God's family.
- v. 7 – We have been forgiven and redeemed.
- v. 8 – We have been lavished with God's grace.
- v. 9 – We have been given knowledge of God's glorious will.
- v.10 – We will enjoy these blessings forever.
- v. 11 – We have received an inheritance in God's kingdom.
- v. 13-14 – We have been given the Holy Spirit as God's guarantee of our redemption.

3.) The church will prevail in Christ forever.

- That which God planned and predestined, He will surely perform.
- v. 13-14 – *“You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*

- If you have received the Holy Spirit through authentic faith in Christ, then you have been given God's guarantee that you will inherit God's kingdom.
- This is why we affirm the eternal security of true believers.
- Our security in Christ was planned before Creation, purchased on the cross, and will persevere forever.
- Matthew 16:15-18 – *“But what about you?” [Jesus] asked. ‘Who do you say I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.’”*
- The church of Jesus Christ is the only thing on earth that will last.
 - v. 9-10 – *“And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.”*
 - All that will endure is that which is that over which Jesus Christ is Head. Only the church will qualify in this category.
 - Colossians 1:18 – *“[The Son] is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.”*
 - Anything that rejects the headship of Christ will not survive.
 - Revelation 20:12-15 – *“I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened... If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”*

The church is the epicenter of God's purposes on earth. It was predestined in Christ before Creation, purchased in Christ on the cross, and it will prevail in Christ forever. When Christ returns, the church is all that will endure—everything else will be lost. The world's loves will be lost and its labors will amount to dust. Everything apart from Christ will one day be subjected to the absolute Lordship it rejected.

On the other hand, however, if you are trusting in Jesus Christ this morning, then the roots of your existence are planted in the rich soil of God's eternal purposes, and the branches of your life are developing into a future with God that

is eternally guaranteed and entirely glorious. There are, therefore, no insignificant moments in your life, and your participation in the body of Christ is completely flooded with purposes that will prevail forever. We never have to examine our lives and believe that we are not going anywhere or not achieving anything.

Best of all, we can know for certain that we are intimately connected to an eternally awesome purpose. God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In His love, He has predestined us to be adopted as His children through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.