



**KING'S
CHURCH** (<http://kingschurchedinburgh.org/>)
EDINBURGH

God's Incredible Church

Ephesians 3:1-13

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight [b]into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

God has chosen the church as his body, not only as a demonstration of himself to planet earth but also the heavenly powers. He has chosen the frailty of man, and brought together as a 'one new man in Christ' lots of different nations, and social classes, people who would normally not particularly get on together. Through the grace

of God he demonstrates his amazing multi-faceted wisdom; a wisdom that has been hidden in him throughout history, but revealed with a flourish in the New Testament.

God gives the church a high place in his plans for mankind. There is no post-church era - this is it, we are his bride, we are very precious to him, and that will continue not just in this life but for all eternity.

It is vital that we don't allow things that will cause factions in his marvellous body to enter in. We need to keep short accounts, sort out our differences, forgive our brother and sister quickly, not hold grudges, not show preference to one type of person. The unity that Christ died and bled for in his church must be uttermost in our ambition and behaviour towards each other. We need to work hard and strive to this end.

God also does not want us to be a cult, mindlessly following our leader. He wants us to be creative and think things through ourselves. Part of the multi-coloured wisdom of God is that we would exhibit lots of variety, different ideas on how to reach the lost, different expressions of how God impacts our lives.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones: *"To say that the Christian church was a mere afterthought in the mind of God, that he had never really intended it in eternity... The greatest thing in the universe, the greatest manifestation of God's own wisdom, an after-thought? The church, far from-being an after-thought, is the brightest shining of the wisdom of God... There is nothing beyond the church. She is the highest and most supreme manifestation of the wisdom of God."*

Questions:

- Look at the above quote from Martyn Lloyd-jones. Do you agree with this? Do you think that it is the brightest shining of God's wisdom? Do you think that there maybe something beyond or better than the church?
- What does it mean to us to make sure that we keep unity and make sure King's is a beautiful demonstration to the heavenly angels? What things can you think about that might sneak in to cause division and a bad testimony?
- Being a place where people can express their difference is important. What new things do you think we could be more creative on?

- Finally, how do we hold these two important values together, expressing difference, and yet remaining of one heart?



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