

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE PURPOSE OF GOD AND THE ECONOMY OF THE MYSTERY**

Message One

**God's Purpose—
His Determined Intention to Have the Church**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; 3:10; Rom. 8:28

- I. In order to participate in the recovery of the church, we need to see God's eternal purpose concerning the church—Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:9-11; Rom. 8:28.**
- II. God's purpose is His determined intent to gain the church—Eph. 1:9, 11.**
- III. The eternal purpose (lit., "the purpose of the ages") was made by God in eternity past for eternity future—3:11.**
- IV. The word *purpose* in Ephesians 3:11 is equivalent to the word *plan*; we may speak of the eternal plan which God planned in Christ:**
 - A. God has a plan, which He planned in eternity; God's eternal purpose is God's eternal plan.
 - B. *His purpose* in Romans 8:28 refers to the purposeful determination in God's plan.
 - C. God's plan is to have a corporate expression of Himself in Christ the Son by the Spirit through the Body composed and built up with many regenerated and transformed people by the mingling of Himself with humanity—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16.
- V. Ephesians 3:10-11 reveals that the existence of the church is according to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord:**
 - A. The church was planned by God in eternity; before time began, in eternity, God purposed to have the church—1:4-5, 9, 11, 22-23.
 - B. In eternity past and for eternity to come, God planned and purposed to have the church in Christ and for Christ—3:10-11:
 1. The church is not a temporary matter but an eternal matter in the eternal purpose of God; the church is the center and subject of God's eternal plan.
 2. The church is in this age and throughout this age, yet it is from eternity past and for eternity future—Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Rev. 21:2, 9-11.
- VI. God planned to have the church composed of regenerated and transformed human beings who are coordinated and built together as a corporate Body—Eph. 1:22-23; 2:21-22; 3:14-21:**
 - A. God planned that this corporate Body would be a corporate vessel into which He would work Himself—vv. 14-17.
 - B. God's purpose, His determined intention, is to have a corporate Body, a corporate vessel, with which He could mingle Himself and all that He has; this vessel is the church—4:4-6, 16.
 - C. The church is dear, lovable, and precious to God because the church is His good pleasure, the desire of His heart—1:5, 9, 22-23.
- VII. The existence of the universe is according to God's eternal purpose to have the church—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9-11:**

- A. The full revelation of the Scriptures unveils to us that all things in the universe are for the church—v. 9.
- B. Even the three persons of the Godhead are for the divine purpose of having the church to fulfill God's eternal plan through the dispensing of God in His Divine Trinity into humanity so that the church may come into existence—1:3-23; Matt. 28:19; 16:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1:1.
- C. The heavens, the earth, a multitude of other things, and the tripartite man are required in order that the church may exist to express God; without these things God cannot have the church in the universe to be His corporate expression—Zech. 12:1; Rev. 4:11.

VIII. We were saved for God's purpose, and now His purpose should be our purpose—2 Tim. 1:9; 3:10; Rom. 8:28.