**The Gospel Made Visible**

**A Sermon Series on The Church & Meaningful Church Membership**

**“The Church: The Wisdom of God”**

**Ephesians 3: 10-11**

**All that God has done in sending Jesus Earth to save sinners was for one main purpose and one overarching aim: Ephesians 3:10, “so that through *the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places”.**

**The local church is the very\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of God’s plan to make His glory and wisdom known to the heavenly realms.**

**Paul is saying that these two groups (Jew and Gentile) with their long history of hostility and enmity are now together and joined in the same body. They are part of the same church and partakers of the same grace through the same savior, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**The rulers and authorities in the heavenly places are informed and learn more of God’s unfolding plan of salvation and reconciliation by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the church and observing how God’s people come together regularly, commit to one another, follow what He has commanded, and worship Him.**

**Ephesians 3:10 tells us that these heavenly creatures worship God more truly and with greater knowledge because of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of a regularly gathered group of believers in a local church!**

**Your local church is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ plan to tell the world and the heavens about who He is and what He has done!**

**This has been God’s plan from the beginning - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Eph. 3:11)**

**How will the world around us, the lost among us and the heavenly realms see and know God and His gospel? The Answer: the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**“The church is the place where the gospel is made \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”**

**What does it communicate about God when we let the arguments and the divisions of the world creep in and divide us as a church? What does it say about the living God of heaven when the church is not important or a priority in the lives of those who claim to know him and who say they love him? What does it say about the living God of heaven when we don’t commit ourselves to a local church - a body of believers - as He has commanded us to? What does it say about the living God of heaven when all membership is to us is a name on a roll or a line in an obituary? What does it say about the living God of heaven when we don’t view the joining of our lives with a local group of believers as necessary, essential, or meaningful? What does it say about the living God of heaven when to us, the church is simply a building, a physical address, a spiritual grocery store - where we can get what we need - but only when we need it? What does it say about the living God of heaven when we approach church with only a consumer’s mentality that views church only as a means to provide and meet our needs? To fill up our spiritual tank and get a spiritual tune up? What does it say about the living God of heaven when a church is no different to us than a Sam’s, Costco, or a Country Club where you pay your dues and you belong? What does it say about God when the local church is not seen as necessary, essential, or meaningful?**

**However, when you and I personally commit ourselves to God and to a church body with consistent attendance and participation. When we seek to use our gifts in order to serve, love, and bear in patience and grace with one another. When we seek unity amongst the various differences among us. When we confess our sin and hold each other accountable. When we commit to give ourselves to this type of relationship and fellowship - it says something about God. It says something about how we view him and his people - the church. It says something profound, beautiful, and wonderful about *the manifold wisdom of God*.**

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| **church** | **center** | **Jesus Christ**  | **watching** | **witness** |
| **God’s** | **eternally** | **church** | **visible** |