

GOD'S MAGNIFICENT IDEA

Part VI

Ephesians 1:3-8

Introduction: The magnificent idea that God the Father had was to be developed and maintained by His Son Jesus Christ. Matthew 16:13-19. This ingenious idea was not to be a transitory edifice but rather a prodigious haven serving as a refuge in the time of storm. The heavenly Architect has designed His magnificent idea to bring glory to Himself and to be a shining "city on a hill," beaming light into the whole darkened world. In order for this ubiquitous God to fulfill His purpose in this special habitation, it is imperative that every member of the body of Christ be in their place of function and assignment to aggressively assume his or her responsibility. We must allow the ebullience of God's vision for the world to be transferred to our mind, so that we will harmoniously be on the same page fulfilling His dream of being a panacea for humankind's ills. God performed exploits through the early disciples because they amalgamated into one accord. (Acts 2:1.) Every member of the body of Christ is to be involved in the corporate expression of the church and to impact the planet for God.

I. God's magnificent idea

- A. His holy edifice will be a successful operation marching against the very gates of hell. Matthew 16:18. (Prevail: "to gain the advantage or mastery; be victorious; triumph over...") Romans 16:20 states that Satan will be crushed under our feet.
 1. God's idea unfolds. In the revelatory teaching of the Master, we have the basis upon which the New Testament church is built. Matthew 16:18. On the day of Pentecost, that church was inaugurated. Acts 1:8. In the years that followed, God's magnificent idea developed even as the early leaders faced problems, crisis, and opposition. As the church matured, the local expression became more easily definable.
 - a. A congregation in a given locality. Acts 8:1.
 - b. An assembly of believers in Christ. Acts 5:14.
 - c. A place of teaching and discipline. Acts 11:26.
 2. The unfolding thrust of the New Testament is the local church. Each book of the New Testament demonstrates how God uses the local fellowship to bring His people to maturity and completion. God inspires us to be in sync with what He is excited about.
- B. God's idea involves a peculiar people. Ephesians 3:9-11.
 1. In Ephesians 3:10, Paul unveils to us the fact that the manifold wisdom of God is going to be unfolded and demonstrated through the church. The wisdom God is revealing through the church is manifold, or many-sided, much varied, having great variety or diversity. The Bible gives us pictures to teach us of this manifold wisdom.
 - a. The branch of the Lord. Isaiah 60:21.
 - b. The city of the living God. Hebrews 12:22.
 - c. The flock of God. 1st Peter 5:1-2.
 - d. God's husbandry. 1st Corinthians 3:9.
 - e. The congregation of the saints. Psalm 149:1.
 2. Each of these pictures show the distinct contribution they make to the whole concept of what God is doing through the church.
 - a. We are a peculiar people. 1st Peter 2:5-10. The world would take this to mean that we are eccentric or odd. In the Biblical sense we are special, precious, and His private possession. We are set apart because of the special value He places on us.
 - b. As His family, our loving Father is in the process of bringing us into maturity. The family is made up of children who are peculiar because they have a different heritage than those around them.
 - c. Because of our special spiritual heritage, we become the "called out," separated, unique, chosen children of God.
 - d. The New Testament church is challenged to remain faithful to the Word of God and to not compromise its morals or ethics to become politically correct. Paul admonishes us to be separate from the world. 2nd Corinthians 6:16-18.

Conclusion: It is unfortunate that a large segment of the church has lost its way. The time has come for those of us who represent Him to stand up and influence the world instead of allowing the world to influence us. Our generation is waiting for us to lead them. Romans 8:19.