

Discovery Group - Gospel Living

(1) The Church

Accountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

Bible: Ephesians 3:1-11

Read *passage* aloud & someone retell in their own words

- What do we learn from this passage about God?
- What do we learn from this passage about people?

Read the *article* on the next page.

- What is God's plan for the Church? In what way is the Church central to God's plan for the universe?
- What is your part in this plan?

Commit

What is Jesus calling you to do in *obedience* this week?

Who can you *share* this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

Abide: Read and meditate on the following passages this week:

- Ephesians 2:18-3:11
- Colossians 1:24-29

The Church in God's Plan

God has a plan for the universe. For the Church. For you. His plan is eternal. It always has existed. You, as part of the Church, are part of His plan. God wants to work with you to fulfill His eternal purposes.

In Ephesians 2, Paul writes that the Gentiles are now welcomed into the household of God, just as Jews are. This household has been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ as the cornerstone. In Ephesians 3, Paul states that the revelation that Gentiles are included in the household of God used to be a mystery, but has now been made known.

What exactly is this plan Paul is writing about? God has ordained that His wisdom would be made known to all “rulers and authorities in the heavenly places” through His household, the Church. The Church is to be a manifestation of the glory of God for all the world to see.

Paul received a twofold revelation from Jesus: that Gentiles are now welcomed into God's household and that the Church is central to God's plan. Paul received this directly from Jesus, along with the command that he was to make this gospel known to the Gentiles. This is important for us to realize because it means that the revelation is for all time. Paul speaks of an eternal plan. Gentiles are still welcomed into the family. The Church is still vital to the world seeing the glory of God and receiving the gospel.

The Church is central to God's plan. It was not an afterthought. God has decreed a specific and very important role for it. It was not formed to fill our desire for community. It is not even primarily for our own fulfillment. It exists to fulfill the eternal plan of God by revealing His wisdom and glory to the world. The Church puts God on display for all to see. This means that you have a purpose within the Church. You have an individual, eternal purpose that is fulfilled in the purpose of the Church. This cannot be overstated! This truth provides powerful insight into your purpose on earth, and should inform your priorities and choices. Nothing you do is more important than playing your part in fulfilling God's eternal plan. And the Church is central to God's plan.