



“What Ships are Built For”

Ephesians 3: 20-21

GracePoint Church, Ephrata. 28 APRIL 2019

Introduction

The Central Question:

The Central Answer:

A Little Context:

- I. **To Him: The Awesome Immensity of God** [v. 3: 20a]
 1. Why He is worthy- Characteristics of God:

- II. **Who is Able: The Awesome Power of God** [v. 3: 20b]
 1. ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ (Super-Extra-Inexhaustible-Exceeding-Abundance)
 2. “According to” versus “As a Portion of”
 3. Within Us:

- III. **In the Church: The Awesome Glory of God** [v. 3: 21a]
 1. G.R.A.C.E.
 2. Designed, Built, Equipped, and Crewed for:

- IV. **Forever and Ever: The Awesome Scope of God** [v. 3: 21b]
 1. Storms
 2. Perspective Change

So What?: Choice; Actions & Behaviors. *Are you crew or passenger?*

ARTICLE 9: THE CHURCH [excerpts]

The Church, Universal and Local

We believe in the one universal Church, whose Foundation and Founder is the Lord Jesus Christ, composed of all those united, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to the risen and ascended Son of God as members of the church which is the body and bride of Christ. We believe that the functional beginning of the Church occurred on the Day of Pentecost, and that the Church is completely distinct from Israel, and will be consummated at the rapture of the Church wherein the spiritual building will be complete. The Church is chosen in Christ and united to Him through faith by the Spirit in one Body, with Christ Himself as the all- supplying, all- sustaining, all-supreme, and all-authoritative Head. (Matt. 16:18-20; Acts 2; 1 Cor. 3:11, 12:13; Acts 11:15-17, 20:28; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-7; Rom. 11:25)

We believe it is God's will that the universal Church find expression in local churches in which believers assemble together for the purpose of worship of God, instruction in His Word, participation in true fellowship, and actively engage in expressions of faith. Included in worship, instruction, fellowship and expression, believers gather to hear the Word of God proclaimed, to engage in corporate worship, to practice the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, to build each other's faith through the manifold ministries of love, to hold each other accountable in the obedience of faith through Biblical discipline, and to engage in local and world evangelization. The Church is a body in which each member should find a suitable ministry for His grace-gifts; it is the household of God in which the Spirit dwells; it is the pillar and bulwark of God's truth in a truth-denying world. (Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:19-25).

We believe that the ultimate purpose of the Church is to glorify God in the everlasting and ever-increasing gladness of worship. (1 Cor. 10:31; Rev. 5:9-12)

We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's, whether Jews or Gentiles, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and fervently loving one another with a pure heart (Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14-15).

We believe that whether Christ-followers are *gathered* or *scattered* we are 'the Church' (1 Pet. 2:9-10)

The Church, the Christian's Walk

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord (Rom. 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:5-9).

The Church, Christ's Command and Commission

We believe the church is commanded to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and mind and our neighbors as ourselves. (Matt. 22:37-40)

We believe that the commission given by the Lord Jesus to make disciples of all nations is binding on His Church to the end of the age. This task is to proclaim the Gospel to every tribe and tongue and people and nation, baptizing them, teaching them to observe the words and ways of the Lord, and gathering them into churches able to fulfill their Christian calling among their own people. The ultimate aim of world missions is that God would create, by His Word, worshippers who glorify His name through glad-hearted faith and obedience. Missions exist because universal, worldwide worship does not exist. When the time of ingathering is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever. Worship, therefore, is the fuel and the goal of missions. (Matt. 28:18-20; Rev. 5:9; Acts 14:23; Rom. 1:5; John 4:23; Rom. 15:8-11)

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, to make Christ known to the whole world (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11).

The Church, the Christian's Service

We believe that divine, enabling grace-gifts¹ for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to their own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the early church there were certain engifted people—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some people are engifted by the Spirit to be evangelists, pastors and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11).

We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in their service to God, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself (1 Cor. 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Cor. 5:10).

¹ See Statement #5 "God the Holy Spirit" for an expanded definition of spiritual gifts.