

THE DIVINE MASTERPIECE

The Final Display of God's Character Through His Church

Thesis: It is God's ultimate plan to illuminate the world with the true knowledge of His character through the church. The glory of God's character—His self-sacrificing, other-centered love—was fully revealed and vindicated in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. As the body of Christ, the church is now the medium through which that same glory is to be declared and revealed to the whole world.

CREATED FOR GLORY

Isaiah 43:6-7—Notice that God created us for His glory.

Romans 3:23—All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 5:1-2—1Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 8:18-19—18For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

THE MEANING OF GLORY

Exodus 33:18-19—18And he (Moses) said, "Please, show me Your glory." 19Then He (God) said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you."

Psalms 97:6—The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the peoples see His glory.

Psalms 115:1—Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to Your name give glory, because of Your mercy, because of Your truth.

Isaiah 28:5—In that day the LORD of hosts will be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of His people.

THE EARTH WILL BE FILLED WITH GOD'S GLORY

Notice that each of the following Scriptures foretells the same eventual event:

Numbers 14:21 / Isaiah 60:1-5 / Ezekiel 43:1-2

Habakkuk 2:14 / Revelation 18:1-2

A BACKDROP OF DECEPTION

Revelation 12:7-9—7And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

NOTE: "War" in this text is *polemos* in the Greek, from which we get the English words polemic and politics.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4—³If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

GOD'S CHARACTER VINDICATED IN CHRIST

John 1:14—The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Luke 2:13-14—¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

Luke 24:25-27—²⁵Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” ²⁷And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

John 12:23-28, 31-32—Notice that the self-sacrificing death of Christ revealed God's glory and draws people to Him.

Genesis 3:15—I will put enmity Between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

Colossians 2:15, NIV—[Jesus] disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

GOD'S CHARACTER VINDICATED IN THE CHURCH

John 17:4, 10—⁴[Father] I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do... ¹⁰And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

Romans 16:20—The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

Revelation 12:11—And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Revelation 10:7—In the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

Ephesians 2:8-10—⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 3:9-11—⁹To make all see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; ¹⁰to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, ¹¹according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

NOTE: Satan's goal is to blind peoples minds to the gospel of Christ because it reveals the true image of God. The gist of the war between God and Satan is encapsulated in this key Scripture. If our evangelistic endeavors are not specifically concentrated on preaching the image of God revealed in Christ, we are not preaching the gospel.

NOTE: This Scripture indicates a secondary fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 through the church.

NOTE: Here we see that *the mystery of God* is the unifying of all intelligent, free will creatures in Heaven and on Earth by the revelation of His forgiving grace in Christ.

NOTE: By virtue of what God accomplished in Christ, trusting that what we see of God in Him is true, we have access to and fellowship in the mystery of God's manifold wisdom, and we are privileged to be the channel through which that mystery is revealed to the on-looking universe.

“Behold Your God”—Isaiah 40:9

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All Scripture References are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.