

“THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH AND HER GLORIOUS FUTURE”

Ephesians 5:27

INTRODUCTION:

- A. There are glorious organizations on the earth:
 - 1. When you go to another country and come back to the US, you might say this is a glorious nation.
 - 2. Some people find glory in their schools and sports teams.
- B. Definition of “glorious”:
 - 1. Having or deserving glory; famous.
 - 2. Conferring or advancing glory: *a glorious achievement.*
 - 3. Characterized by great beauty and splendor; magnificent: *a glorious sunset.*
 - 4. Delightful; wonderful: *had a glorious visit with old friends.*
- C. The word “glorious” appears 13 times in the NT. It can be defined as “magnificence, excellence, pre-eminence.” (Thayer).
- D. The New Testament refers to:
 - 1. The *glorious heavenly body* of Jesus, Philippians 3:21.
 - 2. The *glorious power* of the Lord, Colossians 1:11.
 - 3. The *glorious gospel*, 1 Timothy 1:11.
 - 4. The *glorious appearing* of Jesus, Titus 2:13.
- E. Important passage for our study tonight: “that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” **Ephesians 5:27.**
- F. What makes the Church glorious? What glorious future awaits the church?

I. THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH IS SEEN IN HER BEGINNING:

- A. The Church was always in the PLAN OF GOD. That makes her glorious.
“according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,”
Ephesians 3:9-11.
- B. The Church is glorious because of her BUILDER -- Jesus
“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” **Matthew 16:16-18** (NKJ).
- C. The Glory of the Church is seen in her PURCHASE PRICE: “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God *which He purchased with His own blood.*” **Acts 20:28.**

II. THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH IS SEEN IN HER CONTENT:

- A. “And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being *saved*.” **Acts 2:47**.
- B. “Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the *elect*, that they also may obtain the salvation which is *in Christ Jesus* with eternal glory.” **2 Timothy 2:10**.
- C. The church contains those who are saved because there is no salvation outside of Christ.

III. THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH IS SEEN IN HER MISSION:

- A. BENEVOLENCE, (Acts 4, 6, 11; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5).
- B. EDIFICATION, Acts 14:21-22 -- “they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith...”
- C. EVANGELISM, “Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.” Acts 8:4.

IV. THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH IS SEEN IN HER FUTURE IN HEAVEN.

- A. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. ***And thus we shall always be with the Lord***. Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18 (NKJ).
- B. Heaven is a REAL place, John 14:1-3.
- C. Heaven is a BEAUTIFUL place.
 - 1. It is described as having walls of precious stones, gates of pearls, and the street of pure gold, ***Revelation 21:9-21***.
 - 2. “How beautiful Heaven must Be.”
- D. Heaven is a PERFECT place -- “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” ***Revelation 21:4***.
- E. “Heaven will surely be worth it all.” -- “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” ***Romans 8:18***.
- F. THAT’S HOW GLORIOUS OUR HOME IN HEAVEN WILL BE!

V. THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH SEEN IN HER FUTURE ON EARTH.

- Contrary to what some would say, I think there IS a glorious future for the Lord’s church.
 - When you consider the future of the Church, there is a DIVINE side and a HUMAN side in the matter of her future HERE ON THE EARTH.
- A. The future glory of the church ON EARTH will be determined by our MANNER OF LIVING. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and ***GLORIFY YOUR FATHER*** in heaven.” ***Matthew 5:16***.

- B. The future glory of the church ON EARTH will be determined by our OBEDIENCE.
"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."
John 15:8.
- C. The future glory of the church ON EARTH will be determined by our ZEAL.
1. Paul writes that we should be
 - a. "Zealous for good works," **Titus 2:14.**
 - b. "Always abounding in the work of the Lord," **1 Corinthians 15:58.**
 2. ILLUSTRATION: There was an interesting event during the World Cup a few years ago. Most of the world takes soccer much more seriously than we do in the United States. Example: The action of a South Korean fan must be considered extreme. Trying to inspire the team, the man decided to pour *paint thinner* on himself and set himself on fire. He felt that his phantom spirit would help South Korea win the World Cup. He was trying to get his team "fired up", but only succeeded in putting himself in the hospital.
 3. While we would certainly not recommend setting yourself on fire, the Lord does want us to "burn with zeal." Paul exhorted the Romans to be "fervent in spirit,"
Romans 12:11.
 - a. Fervent: zeo (dzeh'-o); a primary verb; **to be hot (boil, of liquids; or glow, of solids)**, i.e., (figuratively) be fervid (earnest):
 - b. This Greek word occurs only two times. The only other passage describes the zeal of the evangelist *Apollos*, Acts 18:25.
 4. If we will be zealous enough, we can help ensure a good future for the Lord's church here on earth.

CONCLUSION:

- A. What is your level of zeal?
- B. Are you spiritually asleep and in need of revival?
- C. How does your life impact the future glory of the Church?

Ricky Phillips
Martin Church of Christ
Martin, TN

rphillips@martinchurchofchrist.org