

The Glory of the Church

Introduction:

1. Psalm 144:3-4 describes the incredible glory of God dealing with men.
2. I Kings 8:12-20,27 describes Solomon's dedicatory prayer before His temple.
3. I Timothy 6:13-16 describes this same glorious God as our Lord Jesus Christ.
4. Revelation 1:10-20 describes this same glorious God in the Man Christ Jesus.
5. Revelation 2:1 and 3:20 describe this Lord Jesus Christ seeking fellowship with churches.

I. Its MEANING

- A. Church is another word for congregation (Hebrews 2:12 cp Psalm 22:22).
- B. Churches also assemble formally (I Cor 14:34-35) in buildings (Ac 19:37).
- C. Rather than a mere building for meetings, it is a specific group of people.
- D. Rather than merely people, it is people God has chosen for Himself.
- E. The Old Testament church consisted of the nation of Israel (Acts 7:38).
- F. John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles reformed this church (Heb 9:10).
- G. It now includes Gentiles in a rebuilt tabernacle of David (Acts 15:13-18).
- H. Any other concepts or ideas are worthless, misleading, and dangerous.

II. Its ORIGIN

- A. The LORD designed it according to His own sovereign will.
 1. He established the charter and rules (Law of Moses or I Tim 3:15).
 2. He doesn't like alterations or innovations (Deut 12:32; Mat 28:20).
 3. Our Lord Jesus stated His intent to build His church (Matt 16:18).
 4. Loners who think they can worship God by themselves are wrong.
- B. The LORD chooses those whom are His church (Deut 7:6-10; Amos 3:2).
 1. The church has been very small at times (Gen 6:8 cp 8:15-22).
 2. The LORD adds to the church His members (Ac 2:47; I Co 12:18).
- C. It is not merely a manmade social organization for religious purposes.
- D. As the LORD created the family for our profit, so He designed the church.
 1. God designed each legitimate institution of man with His wisdom.
 2. Our society's alternatives manifest the glory of the family.

III. Its DESIGN

- A. It is like a body with various members (I Corinthians 12:13-27).
- B. It is like a family in structure (Nu 20:29; I Tim 3:5; Gal 4:19; I The 2:11).
- C. It is like a temple or house as God's place of abode (I Ti 3:15; I Co 3:16).
- D. It has its own rulers and teachers (I Corinthians 12:28 cp Eph 4:8-11).
- E. It is an organism (living thing) – not just an organization (dead structure).
 1. If merely an organization, it is void of the Spirit and Life of Christ.
 2. If filled with Christ's Presence, it is a living body (I Peter 2:4-5).

IV. Its GLORY

- A. As the temple of God (I Cor 3:16; Eph 2:19-22; II Cor 6:16).
- B. As the house of God (I Tim 3:15-16; I Peter 2:4-5).
- C. As the body of Christ, the fullness of Himself (Eph 1:23; 5:30-32).
- D. All are kings and priests offering sacrifices (I Pet 2:5; Rev 1:6; 5:10).

V. Its CARE

- A. Bishops – the stars in His right hand (Rev 1:16,20; 2:1; 3:1).
 - 1. Chosen by Jesus Christ (Psalm 68:18 cp Eph 4:8-11).
 - 2. Ambassadors of Jesus Christ, the King of kings (II Cor 5:20).
 - 3. Servants of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:1; Col 4:12; II Tim 2:24).
 - 4. Soldiers of Jesus Christ (II Tim 2:3-4; II Cor 10:3-6).
- B. Deacons manage the carnal aspects of a church (Acts 6:1-4; I Tim 3:8-13).
- C. As Titus, who exercises his office of bishop to provide for Crete (Tit 1:5).
- D. Members have duties toward one another (I Thess 5:14 cp Heb 10:23-25).

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