

“The Plan”

Ephesians 3:7-10

THE BIG PICTURE IS THIS...

1. God has a plan. v.9

- Plan = carrying out a greater purpose. ‘overseeing how a household is managed’
- Same word in 3:2: ...*assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace*

2. What is the plan?

- Same word in 1:10: ...*a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and on earth.*
- “...to unite all things in him” him = Jesus Christ unite = literally, the word means “re-unite”

3. When is the plan ‘coming together’?

- It is happening now. Ref. 1:10: ...*a plan for the fullness of time...* Ref. Galatians 4:4-5

WHAT'S AMAZING ABOUT IT IS THIS...

1. God works through unlikely people. v.8

- Paul: *I am the very least of all the saints...* (Paul used to be ‘Saul’ – a Jew, Pharisee, persecuted Xns.)
- 1 Timothy 1:15: *The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.*

→ If God can do that with Paul, don't you think he can work through you?

2. God works reconciliation in hopelessly divided relationships. v.9

- In the NT, ‘mystery’ means something like an ‘aha moment.’
- Paul told us what the mystery is in v.6

→ If God can reconcile Jews with Gentiles, don't you think he can work in your hopelessly divided relationships?

3. God is working through the church (!) to reveal the wisdom of God to spiritual powers of darkness. v.10

- ...rulers and authorities... → Who are they? Ref. Ephesians 6:10-12; 2:2
- The wisdom of God is foolishness to the world. Ref. 1 Cor. 1:18-29; Col. 1:15-20; 2:8-23

-Col. 2:15: *He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.*

THE WAY TO GET THERE IS THIS...

1. Personally receiving God as your Savior. v.14-17

- ...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...

2. Personally grasping the greatness of God's love. v.17-19

→ Paul says all this... then turns to prayer. This is how to ‘bring it home’ to your heart.

“Secular history concentrates its attention on kings, queens, and presidents, on politicians and generals, in fact on ‘VIPs.’ The Bible concentrates rather on a group it calls ‘the saints,’ often little people, insignificant people, unimportant people, who are however at the same time God's people—and for that reason are both ‘unknown (to the world) and yet well-known to God.’

Secular history concentrates on wars, battles and peace-treaties, followed by yet more wars, battles and peace-treaties. The Bible concentrates rather on the war between good and evil, on the decisive victory won by Jesus Christ over the powers of darkness, on the peace-treaty ratified by his blood, and on the sovereign proclamation of an amnesty for all rebels who will repent and believe.

Again, secular history concentrates on the changing map of the world, as one nation defeats another and annexes its territory, and on the rise and fall of empires. The Bible concentrates rather on a multi-national community called ‘the church,’ which has no territorial frontiers, which claims nothing less than the whole world for Christ, and whose empire will never come to an end.”

-John Stott