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WHY IS CHURCH IMPORTANT ANYWAY?

Ephesians 3:8-11

Revelation 2:1-5, 1 To the angelof the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. 2I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. 4Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. 5Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

Revelation 2:8, 12, 18, 3:1, 7, 14

God’s Intent for His Church

Ephesians 3:8-11, 8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ,9and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.10His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Isaiah 61:2-3, 2 . . . to comfort all who mourn, 3and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garmentof praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

* The *crown of beauty* speaks to our heritage.
* The *oil of joy* speaks of the Holy Spirit.
* The *garment of praise* speaks of our heart.

Intention #1. We all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_God’s grace well.(Ephesians 3:8-9)

God’s grace functions powerfully in believers who:

1. Pray(Ephesians 3:8)
2. Play their part(Ephesians 3:8)
3. Take their place(Ephesians 3:9)

1 Corinthians 12:18, But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

Romans 11:29, for God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable.

Intention #2. We all release God’s grace well. (Ephesians 3:10-12)

God’s grace functions powerfully through believers who:

1. Embrace His passion(Ephesians 3:10)
2. Esteem His purpose(Ephesians 3:10-11)

Genesis 28:10-13, 10 Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. 11When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.12He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13There above it stood the Lord, and he said: “I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.

Matthew 16:18; John 1:51

Genesis 28:16-19, 16 When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it.” 17He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.” 18Early the next morning Jacob took the stonehe had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. 19He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.

* *Bethel* means house of God.
* *Luz* means growing there.

Answers: receive

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