

According to verse 9, God has a plan

- 3 things about God's plan:
  - **A mystery**
    - In NT = a truth once hidden that is now revealed
    - Not incomprehensible, but **undiscoverable** by human wisdom
    - It had to be revealed to humanity by God (an issue of divine revelation)
    - **God has now revealed to us his mysterious plan** (v. 9<sup>a</sup>)
  - **About Christ**
    - The plan is **not about us**
    - But we are part of it (God has a plan for His son...)
  - **For God's own pleasure**
    - The plan is **not for us**
    - But we certainly benefit from it (we belong to His son; v. 6 & 11)

This plan is an affront to our culture's exaltation of **human wisdom** and **self-oriented, egocentrism**

- It wasn't discerned by us, it isn't about us, and it's not ultimately for us
- Down right un-American!
- We want to be able to figure it out ourselves, make it about ourselves, and have it serve our good pleasure

But God's plan is **revealed to us by grace**, we are **part of it by grace**, and we **benefit from it by grace**

God has now revealed to us His mysterious plan regarding Christ, a plan to fulfill His own good pleasure (v. 9)

Verse 10: **And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth**

The plan regarding Jesus, which is for the Father's **good pleasure**, is that **at the right time everything** is going to be under the authority of Christ

Last week we thought about Colossians 1:16-17

Through Christ **God created everything** in the heavenly realms and on earth.

He made the things we can see and the things we can't see...

Everything was created **through him** and **for him**.

We exist for **God's pleasure** and **God's glory** and not our own

- As creatures, who are contingent, dependent and subordinate
- We must look upward in order to discover our identity (not inward)
- **Our core problem is not lack of information, it is flight and rebellion**<sup>1</sup>
- Once that is rectified through faith and repentance in response to the Gospel
- Then (as we discussed last week) we can begin to **glorify God**
  - By **enjoying Jesus** and His gifts and goodness
  - Which is part of **God's good pleasure**, because He rejoices in us (through Christ)

<sup>1</sup> Dan B. Allender & Tremper Longman III, *The Cry of the Soul: How Our Emotions Reveal Our Deepest Questions About God* Colorado Springs, Co.: 1994), 15.

Verse 10 reveals to us **why** we can thoroughly enjoy Jesus and His creation even in the midst of everything that we see going on in the world

- And what do we see?
- Famine, disasters, genocide, evil, heartbreak, injustice, perversion, corruption, exploitation
- If our determination was to **merely** enjoy Jesus and His gifts and His goodness to the **exclusion** of the world we would be guilty of some sort of **disengaged, anesthetized escapism** (not on mission)
  - “Children are being trafficked, people are starving, ethnic cleansing is happening, millions are suffering, gross injustice is tolerated and perversion is rampant... but I’m just here enjoying Jesus, His gifts and goodness to the glory of God!”
- **But that is not the way it is**
  - God’s plan is that: **At the right time he will** bring everything together under the authority of Christ—**everything in heaven and on earth**
  - This **future promise** is the basis for our **present peace and pursuits** (why we can enjoy and be on mission)

### Everything is not going to merely continue as it is

- Nor is humanity going to solve the problems of the world (the notion of modernistic humanism has failed)
- No one can look soberly at all that is wrong in the world and say, “Hey, we are getting better!”
- Some of those who have the best grasp on history are most pessimistic about the future
  - G. N. Clark (d. 1979)
    - “There is no secret and no plan in history to be discovered. I do not believe that any future consummation could make sense of the irrationalities of preceding ages.”
    - Famous British Historian (Knighthood in 1953)
    - Taught at Oxford, Cambridge and Trinity
    - Gave a lecture at Cambridge on May 16, 1944

But Scripture tells us that there is a secret, but now revealed (**mysterious**), **plan regarding Christ** that involves a future consummation!

- When everything will be brought together (by God) **under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth.**
- All of earth longs for this! Because there has been such suffering throughout history (error: misplaced hope)

### Romans 8:18-25

...What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God’s curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don’t need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don’t yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

There is a plan—history is going somewhere

- **Everything was created through Christ and for** (or toward) **Christ.** (Col 1:17)
- He is the Alpha and the Omega
- He is the **Lord of Lords and the King of Kings** who will **right every wrong** and **restore all things**

Scripture is crystal clear about the future as it pertains to everything being brought **under the authority of Christ** (God’s plan regarding Jesus)

## 1. Jesus will return in evidential power and glory

- Matthew 24:30<sup>b</sup>

And they (the world) will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

## 2. Jesus will be the visible King over all the earth

- Zechariah 14:9

And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one Lord—his name alone will be worshiped.

- Matthew 25:31-32

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

- Revelation 19:16

On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

## 3. Jesus will rule the world with immediacy and finality

- Daniel 7:14

He was given authority, honor, and sovereignty over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed.

- Revelation 19:15

From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress.

- Revelation 11:15

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices shouting in heaven: “The world has now become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever.”

## 4. Jesus will be recognized as Lord by every person

- Philippians 2:9-11

God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus **every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth** and under the earth, and **every tongue confess** that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## 5. Jesus will banish Satan and his minions

- Revelation 20:10

Then the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur, joining the beast and the false prophet. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

## 6. Jesus will vanquish death, sorrow and pain

- Revelation 21:4

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

## 7. Jesus will be the only one we serve and worship

- Revelation 22:3-4

No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and **his servants will worship him**. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads.

## 8. Jesus will be the only one worshipped, period.

- Revelation 5:11-13

Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders. And they sang in a mighty chorus:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered—to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.”

And then I heard **every creature in heaven and on earth** and under the earth and in the sea. They sang:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever.”

## 9. Jesus will make all things new under His authority

- Revelation 21:5-6<sup>a</sup>

And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!” And then he said to me, “Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.” And he also said, “It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End.”

## 10. Jesus will include all who are His in the final blessings

- Revelation 21:6<sup>b</sup>-7

“To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious **will inherit all these blessings**, and I will be their God, and they will be my children.”

- Jeremiah 31:12-14

They will **come home** and sing songs of joy on the heights of Jerusalem. They will be radiant because of the Lord’s good gifts—the abundant crops of grain, new wine, and olive oil, and the healthy flocks and herds. Their life will be like a watered garden, and all their sorrows will be gone.

The young women will dance for joy, and the men—old and young—will join in the celebration.

I will turn their mourning into joy. I will comfort them and exchange their sorrow for rejoicing.

The priests will enjoy abundance, and my people will feast on my good gifts. I, the Lord, have spoken!

This mystery regarding Christ has been revealed to us

- All things were **created through Christ**, but humanity has rebelled and all things are messed up
- But, all things were also **created for Christ** and He Himself will **right every wrong...**
- ... By God bringing all things **in heaven and on earth under His authority**

That **future reality** has **present implications** for us because of God’s **past actions** for us

- We were **chosen** (v. 4) and **predestined** and have been **adopted** (v. 5) [past]
- So we now we **belong to Christ** (v. 6) [present]—who will rule (v. 10) [future]

## Anxiety and fear are undermined

- Isaiah 35:3-4

With this news, strengthen those who have tired hands, and encourage those who have weak knees.

Say to those with **fearful hearts**, “Be strong, and do not fear, for your God is coming to destroy your enemies. He is coming to save you.”

- Because we know the future we are not **overwhelmed** by the present – and we can work with hope! (**not in vain**)

## Idleness and purposelessness are neutralized

- Because we are currently His, we seek to bring everything under His authority now (marriage, recreation, business, sexuality, finances, etc, etc)
- Stating with ourselves and then **moving into the world** (**Go into the world making disciples...**)
- We live out **the purposes of God** now
- Acts 26:17-18 (Jesus to Paul)

Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God’s people, who are set apart by faith in me.