THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD
(Ephesians 3:10-11)

I. The church has always been in the mind of God.
   A. As you read through the first three chapters of Ephesians, you quickly
      realize that God had the church in mind before the beginning of time.
      1. Paul starts out by showing us all the things that are ours in Christ.
      2. He then lets us know that Jesus died in order to be the head of His
         body, the church (1:22-23).
      3. Paul then tells us that we are saved by grace and faith and brought
         together in body (which is the church).
      4. This body contains both Jew and Gentile and all are given access
         to God by the death of Jesus.
      5. We are now members of the household of God (which is the church
         - 1 Timothy 3:15).
   B. Paul then tells us that we can have the same knowledge that he has and
      that we can understand the mystery of God.
      2. Also notice Galatians 3:28-29.
   D. This mystery has been hidden in, or by, God (1 Peter 1:10-12).
   E. Paul sums all of this up by telling us that this has been God’s eternal
      purpose.
   F. So, from this we see that God always had the church in mind.
   G. Everything that God did in regards to man’s redemption led to the building
      of the church by His only begotten Son.

II. Was the church an afterthought?
   A. It does not take very long, when watching most religious channels, to see
      that the false doctrine of premillenialism is still a prevailing doctrine among
      those in denominationalism.
   B. This doctrine basically teaches that God did not foresee the obstinance
      of the Jews concerning Jesus as the Messiah.
   C. Then, upon realizing that they were not ready for the Messiah at that time,
      God set up the church and orchestrated the death of Jesus as an
      emergency back-up plan.
   D. As you can see, this is one of the most ridiculous religious ideas that has
      ever been put forth.
      1. We have already proven from the book of Ephesians that the
         church was in the mind of God from the beginning of time.
      2. God has predestinated a group of people to be saved and that
         group is made up of those who are a part of the one body
         (Ephesians 4:4).
   E. Not only that, but this theory discounts the death of Jesus.
      1. This idea flies in the face of all the prophecies of the death of
         Jesus.
      2. Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22, and other like passages, might as well be
ripped out of the Bible.

F. Surely one can plainly see that this false doctrine clearly contradicts numerous passages.

G. What about 1 Peter 1:19-20 and Revelation 13:8 which tell us that Jesus was slain before the foundation of the world?

H. Some have called this doctrine harmless, but any doctrine that contradicts scripture can never be taken lightly because it will damn our souls to hell if we follow it.

III. A closing thought about Ephesians 3:10.

A. Many have thought this passage tells the church that it ought to be teaching the wisdom of God to the world.

B. Many passages clearly teach that we need to be preaching the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 5:8 - they filled the city with the doctrine of Jesus; Acts 8:4; Acts 13:1-4; Philippians 4:14-16 - this congregation supported Paul in his preaching).

C. However, this verse tells us that the Lord intends for the world to see His manifold wisdom when the worlds sees His church.

D. The word “known” means “to gain a knowledge of.”
   1. In other words, those who see the church gain the knowledge of God’s wisdom.
   2. The church is on display before all, both heavenly and earthly beings, to show God’s wisdom at it’s finest.

E. That ought to cause us to stop and think for a moment, and maybe sober some of us.
   1. When we have the name “church of Christ” on the sign outside, we are saying that we are displaying the wisdom of God for all to see.
   2. When people go away from here, how much wisdom do they think God has?

F. We are a reflection of the wisdom of God; we need to make sure that we are acting like it.