

The Church

by Charles E. Fuller

The church was conceived in the mind of the Trinity before the foundation of the world, and we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before God.

Duration: 51:50

Scripture: Acts 1:8, Ephesians 1:4-5, Ephesians 2:14-16, Ephesians 4:1, Ephesians 5:20, Ephesians 6:11, Philippians 1:6

Topics: "Church"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker provides an outline of the book of Ephesians, focusing on the theme of the church. The sermon is divided into six chapters, with the first three being doctrinal and the last three practical. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the origin and construction of the church, as well as the believers' walk, worship, and warfare. The sermon also highlights the eternal nature of the church, as it was conceived in the mind of the Trinity before the foundation of the world.

Transcript

We have heard in this joyful town, Jesus saves, Jesus saves. Friends of kind all around, Jesus saves, Jesus saves. Free in Cooperation with Fuller Seminary proudly presents the Old Fashioned Revival.

A broadcast of the Gospel with Dr. Charles Eagle. Jesus saves. Praise Him, praise Him, Jesus our blessed Redeemer.

Sing all the tears, wonderful love proclaim. Hail Him, hail Him, high as the heavens in glory. Praise and honor Him through His holy name.

Praise Him, praise Him, Jesus our blessed Redeemer. Praise Him, praise Him, Jesus our blessed Redeemer. There was a time on earth when all the people had settled long ago.

Yes, the old account was settled long ago. And the record's clear today, for He washed my sins away. When the old account was settled long ago.

The old account was large and growing every day. For I was always sinning and never tried to pay. But when I looked ahead and saw the pain and woe.

I said that I would settle and settle long ago. Long ago. O sinner, seek the Lord, repent of all your sin.

For thus He has commanded, if you would enter in. And then if you should live a hundred years below. He knew you'll not reap what's settled long ago.

My, what a fine audience here today. And I want you to lift it right up as you sing. Turn around and shake hands with everyone.

All right. Have a nice time. Turn right around.

Give everybody a round of applause. No clouds will gather. No storms will threaten.

No fear can mourn. O day of gladness, eternal joy. Beyond the sunset of glad reunion.

With our dear loved ones at their homeland. We'll know the heartache forevermore. Forevermore.

Oh my loving brother, when the world's on fire. Day of judgment may be nearing. What a morning that will be.

There'll be safety there in Jesus. Rock of Ages, let there be. Rock of Ages.

Sinners trembling, saints rejoicing. He's departing to his place. All the handsome Christ will gather.

He has saved them by his grace. Holy congregation, let there be. Oh, oh, oh.

He is coming now from his place. He has proved. Glory, glory, hallelujah.

Glory, glory. His truth is marching on. I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps.

They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps. I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps. His truth is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah. Glory, glory, hallelujah. His truth is marching on.

His truth is marching on. Glory, glory, hallelujah. His truth is marching on.

And now, Mrs. Fuller with the letters. Go right ahead, honey. Greetings, friends, and good letters for you today.

From Seattle, dear Dr. Fuller, the Old Fashioned Revival Hour has come into our home for about 15 years now. At first, my mother was standing alone as a Christian in the family, but over the years, my sister and also my father have come to know Christ as Savior. Your broadcast has had a great part in making ours a Christian home.

It has also encouraged my sister and me to offer ourselves for full-time service. A lovely letter from a lady from Ohio. Dear Reverend Fuller, I am a shut-in, 85 years old, live alone, and haven't any way to go to church.

I am the last of my family, no children living. I put on my best clothes, because it is Sunday, and sit by my radio and listen to you every week. I do enjoy the old songs and the preaching, and I pray when hands are raised for salvation, especially for the servicemen.

A young man writes, I was saved while in high school, listening to the Old Fashioned Revival Hour, and how I did depend on your service for the teaching of the Bible, because for several years I never knew

another believer personally. Your program sustained me, and I became grounded in the word of God as I listened. For ten years now, I have never missed a broadcast.

I have graduated from college and am now in seminary, preparing for the Lord's work. This last letter is an interesting one to me, from Central California. A lady writes, Dear Dr. Fuller, my mother was at your ordination over 26 years ago, and she tells me how everyone felt the Holy Spirit's presence there, and the people had the feeling that you would be a well-used servant of the Lord.

You spoke a few Sundays ago how everyone has a gift, and before you found your gift, you wanted to be another Billy Sunday. Later, you wanted to reach the people in faraway, neglected places, who could not go to church, had no way to go. And God has answered that prayer of yours beyond what you could think or ask, by allowing you to reach the most desolate and neglected places by radio, which was unheard of then.

My husband and I go to church to you every Sunday. We have to stay at home because of about 6,000 turkeys to look after. Our home is a trailer house set on a hilltop in the middle of an almond orchard.

Our front yard is full of God's wonders, trees and sky and turkeys. And that is all for today, friends. I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice, and it called thy love to me.

For thy long blue eyes in the arms of faith have drawn me nearer to the cross, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to thy precious bleeding side. Consecrate me now to thy service, Lord, by the power of grace divine. Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope, and my will be lost in thine.

Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to the cross where thou hast died. Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to thy precious bleeding side. May we stand, please, and sing two verses of number 129, Rescue the perishing, care for the dying.

Two verses and remain standing for a word of prayer. Ooooooooooooh Rescue the perishing, care for the dying. And let them live in the spirit of the grave.

We forgave the sins of the world, and our own heart is filled with praise. Helping from where we came and from where we're going, Jesus is faithful, He is always. On the right hand, Jesus is waiting, Raising our hands up to the King.

We will remember Him, we will remember Him. Jesus, our Savior, is with all of you today. Let your hope ever be, let your hope ever be, Jesus is with all of you today.

Our heads in prayer. Our gracious Heavenly Father, we pray today, especially the first chapter of Ephesians, where thou dost open up the past eternal ages, and then giving us a glimpse of the future eternal ages. May the Holy Spirit give us such a vision of the glories to be revealed in thy Son, that the temporal things of earth will sink into utter insignificance.

And may we be patient unto the coming of the Lord. And all of these things that we're enduring now will soon pass away in the light of the glorious eternity ahead. But, O Father, to the souls that are in sin and in darkness, under condemnation, Holy Spirit of God, speak to them and point them to the Lamb of God.

And may they come out into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and walk as new creation, redeeming the time, occupying till Jesus comes. For we ask it in His name. Amen.

■ There's a rose that is blooming for you, friend. There's a rose that its perfume is... There's a rose, I see. There's a rose, a lovely rose.

Its perfume is for you and for me. All in vain did they crush this fair flower, friend. All in vain did they shatter.

For its roots, deeply bedded, sprang forth. And it blooms still for you and for me. There's a rose, a lovely rose.

There's a rose, a lovely rose that blooms for you. This perfume is for you and for me. ■ Jesus shall reign forevermore, son.

God's dear son turns his journey on. His kingdom spread from shore to shore. Till moon shall dance and rain no more.

From north to south the princes hear. Who pay their homage at his feet. While western empires from them roar.

And heaven's pride for them is more. You are listening to the Old Fashioned Revival Hour with Dr. Charles E. Fuller. The message for today is titled, The Church.

Open your Bibles to the book of Ephesians chapter 1 as we rejoin the broadcast. I'll provide our address information after Dr. Fuller's message. ■ Jesus, my Lord, will love me forever.

From him no part of evil can sever. He gave his life to ransom my soul. Now I belong to him.

Now I belong to Jesus. Jesus belongs to me. Not for the years of time alone.

But for eternity. Once I was lost in sin's degradation. Jesus came down, lifted me up from sorrow and shame.

Now I belong to him. Now I belong to Jesus. Jesus belongs to me.

Not for the years of time alone. But for eternity. If you have your Bibles, open please to the first chapter of Ephesians found in the New Testament, verse 6 verses.

And may we give careful attention to the reading of God's holy word. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. The Ephesian epistle is regarded as the greatest among the epistles of Paul.

In its view it includes both eternities. Eternity past and that eternity yet to come. And as we approach this burning bush, may we, like Moses of old, as we journey on this pilgrim journey, remove our shoes, spiritually speaking, for we are upon holy ground.

And may we come into the heavenly places with reverence and in the spirit of worship and praise and prayer. Ephesians and Colossians are companion epistles. Will you listen carefully? In Colossians, Christ is the head of the body, the church.

For in Colossians 1:18, we read these words. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. In Ephesians, the church is the body of which Christ is the head.

And so the subjects are as follows. Colossians, Christ, Ephesians, the church. And these two epistles together make up the grand fulfillment of our Lord's words.

I am the vine, Colossians, Christ the head. Ye are the branches, Ephesians, the church. Now, this Ephesian epistle, with its six short chapters, has a twofold purpose.

First, not only to set forth the origin and construction of the church, but to establish the believers in their faith, to warn them and to guard them against the danger or the peril of slipping back into their former practices when they were dead in trespasses and sin. May I give you just a brief outline of the six chapters? The first three are doctrinal, and in the first chapter we have the conception of the church in the mind of the Trinity before the foundation of the world. Think of it.

Before the foundation of the world, the church was in the mind of the Trinity. In chapter two, we have the construction of that church, a picture of how God is building the church and of what material he is using. Chapter three, we have the constituents of that church.

Both Jew and Gentile are in the church, but in Christ Jesus they are one. The last three chapters are practical. We have the believers walk in chapter four, walk worthily of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

Chapter five, the believers holy of holy, is worship, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. While in chapter six, we have the believers' warfare, put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. And so in chapter one, the conception of the church, before the foundation of the world, the construction of the church, the constituents of the church, the believers walk, worship, and warfare.

That's been a very helpful outline to me personally, and I just pass it on to you. It's not original with me. And now to chapter one, which chapter takes us back into the eternal ages past.

And may we get such a glimpse of what God has done for us that you'll be willing not only to present your body as a living sacrifice, but that you'll have your eyes fixed upon Christ and stripping yourself of all the things that are secondary and the sins and the weights that thus so easily beset you. Run with patience the race that is set before you and endure hardness and be patient in tribulation. Every believer, whether a babe in Christ or a strong brother in the Lord, should be well taught in this grand theme concerning the church, her calling, her commission, and her consummation.

Since the days of Pentecost, that is when the Holy Spirit came to empower the witnesses some 1900 years ago to go out and preach the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, unto the uttermost part of the earth, God has been calling out a people for his name. And all those who bear or hear rather the glad tidings of salvation, all who sincerely believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and have passed from death, that is, spiritual separation from God, unto life, receiving the gift of eternal life, are the called out ones. And all

such become members of Christ's body, the church, regardless of race, color, or creed.

All who are born again, washed in the precious blood of Christ, are placed by the Holy Spirit into the membership of the body of Christ. Hence the church. Thou in chapter one, the Holy Spirit catalog, all the spiritual blessings God has for us who are members of the body of Christ in Christ Jesus.

And as we count these blessings one by one, may our hearts burn within us, and may we as believers be fused together, and may we have a warmth of fellowship spreading the warmth of God's love to others in this world of darkness and spiritual indifference. Now notice in chapter one, please, that all spiritual blessings, notice the order, come from the Father through Christ by the Holy Spirit. And you have yet to receive any spiritual blessing outside of that combination.

God the Father is the source. Christ is the channel applied by the Holy Spirit. And every blessing that you receive, spiritual blessing, eternal blessing, comes that way.

And first of all, you must be reconciled to God through Christ before you can have these spiritual blessings. Now notice the first blessing, verse four. And as I studied this over the past days, somehow God's given me a new vision of my position and of my place in the body of Christ.

Now notice, don't be alarmed at what you read, but remember this. God here in the first chapter of Ephesians pulls back the curtain of His infinite mind and gives us a glimpse into His thought and into His care for us before the foundation of the world. Let me explain.

He hath chosen us, verse four, He hath chosen us before the foundation of the world. Here we are led into the mysteries of God. I said a moment ago, given an insight into the infinite mind of God and we, His children, finite as we are, we see through a glass darkly.

Someday we'll see Him face to face and understand. And right here in the opening chapter of Ephesians, chapter one, we come face to face with eternal truth. God is omnipotent, has all power.

God is omnipresent. God is omniscient. Now listen carefully.

He has all knowledge and He knows the end from the beginning. He, the eternal God, looking down across the ages, knows those who, upon hearing the gospel, will reject that gospel or receive that gospel and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ passing from death unto life. And those who hear and believe and receive, the wonderful thing is this.

He has been chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. Let me illustrate. Over the household of God, as you enter the one door, the one entrance through Christ, this building fitly framed together, I see these words.

Whosoever will may come and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out and underneath. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. I saw that back in July the 17th, 1917.

I heard the glorious good news, the gospel. I believed and received Christ as my personal Savior. I'm stepping in through the one door of entrance through Christ, believing God's promise that whosoever will may come, I entered and praise be to his name.

I found my name written there from before the foundation of the world. Explain it? No. Comprehend it? No.

I accept it because God's word says so. No wonder the Apostle John said, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. I'm not talking about membership now in your local church or denomination.

That's fine. I'm talking about something bigger. The best is your name written there.

No wonder we sing amazing grace. No wonder we sing marvelous grace of our loving Lord. As the stream of humanity goes by the entrance to that door or to the household of faith and they hear the gospel, some shake their head and say no.

Well, their names will never be written down unless they repent. It's a mysterious subject. Unworthy.

A sinner by nature and by choice. We believe and become new creation. We enter in through the one door and find our names written there.

Do you know it gives me great courage in preaching? Over the past 34 years of my gospel ministry, I've seen literally thousands upon thousands accept Christ as their personal Savior. They're chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. And I know, and you'll bear with me, that there are names written there of those who have not yet received Christ but are going to receive Christ as their personal Savior.

Therefore, God says, preach the Word, proclaim the gospel, and leave the results with God and the Holy Spirit does His work. And when a person receives Christ and becomes a new creation, he wakes up to the fact that before the foundation of the world, his name was written down. How that ought to lift you above the commonplace, above the petty things of life, and see things in their eternal relationship.

And we're chosen for a purpose, that we should be holy. The word holy means to be separated, to have no fellowship with the works of darkness. God says without holiness, separation, you shall not see God.

Without blame, that is, without a blemish, without a spot, without a fault, faultless and blameless before Him. That's God's standard. But now I want to speak briefly on verse 5. For that verse 5, will you listen carefully? Now, don't misunderstand me.

We have another spiritual blessing, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. Predestinated us, what does it mean? In simple language, this is it. It is God's plan that we who are saved will be ultimately conformed to the image of His Son.

And all the testings and the trials and the tribulations and experiences which come our way are from the loving hand of the Father according to His divine will. And no wonder the apostle John again says, Beloved, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And predestination, you, beloved, are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Satan and all of his hosts can't upset God's plan. Poor and weak as we are, and in this body of our humiliation, someday we're going to be like Him. And I'll tell you, no wonder Paul says these are light afflictions working for us a far more and exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Let me read you something. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose, for whom He did foreknow. Here it is.

He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. That's God's Word. And someday, maybe sooner than we realize, the Lord Jesus is coming in power and great glory, coming to receive His church and take them to the judgment seat of Christ, and therefore every believer to be reviewed according to His works.

If he's built upon the foundation, hey, wooden stubble, his works will be burned up, he'll be saved. But if he's built upon that foundation, Christ Jesus, the gold and silver and precious stones, he'll receive a reward. And may you not have your works burned up at the judgment seat of Christ.

Predestinated? Oh, listen. Let me read you just a couple of verses before I close. Paul said, I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

And then again in the 19th verse, for the expectation of creation waited for the manifestation of the sons of God. By the new birth, by regeneration, we are now the sons of God. But there lies ahead a grand and glorious event, and that is, notice, the adoption of children.

And that word, adoption, means the placing of sons. And in the days ahead, the time is coming when the dead in Christ shall arise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. And these bodies of our humiliation will be fashioned like unto his glorious body.

And before all creation, heaven and earth, powers and principalities, the trophies of his grace will be placed as sons of God. Amen. Can you take the trial? Can you take the tribulation? For there lies ahead of us the glory, the shine as the stars forever and ever.

Now listen to me carefully. To you who are in sin, in darkness, separated from God, driven and energized by none other than the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. God says, I'm not willing that you should perish.

I tried to picture by the Holy Spirit and through the word your high calling in Christ Jesus. God is waiting, waiting for you to say, yes, God be merciful to me, a sinner, and save me for Christ's sake. Vile and unclean that you may be, God loves you.

God's not willing that you should perish. Believe his word. Find out when you come inside that your name has been written down before the foundation of the world.

And he that has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. And you'll be kept by the power of God, ready to be revealed at the last day when Jesus comes. My times are in his hand.

I don't know what tomorrow will bring forth. I'm not worried. I'm not concerned so much as I am to see men and women saved and brought into the family of God through the precious blood of Christ.

I plead with you, as though this may be my last sermon, to accept Christ today before it's too late to become a new creation in him. Let's bow our heads in prayer. Friend outside of Christ in the radio audience, wherever you may be, hasten to the foot of the cross.

Kneel where you are. Look up into the Father's face and say, Oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I need Christ, the Lamb of God, to take away my sin.

I realize I'm under condemnation. I have no peace. But you can have peace being justified by faith.

God bless you, wherever you're making the decision. And while our heads are bowed in this splendid, visible audience here today, how many will put up their hands and say, Brother Fuller, pray for me. I here and now want to accept Jesus Christ as my first and Savior.

I'd like to have you remember me in a word of prayer. Will you put your hand up any place in this audience? God bless you. Any others? Quickly, just God bless you over there.

God bless you. Any others here in the lower floor of the auditorium? God is not willing that any should perish. Off to the balcony to my right.

Shoot your hand up. God bless you, lady. To the balconies to the rear.

Come on, settle it now. God bless you. God bless you.

Yes. Any place here, even on the lower floor. Anyone else? Put your hand up and say, pray for me.

Come on, settle it today. Still another hand to go up and say, Brother Fuller, remember me in prayer. God bless you.

Continue in prayer. This is Charles E. Fuller bidding you goodbye and God's richest blessing upon you.

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