

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2018**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
ENJOYING THE RICHES OF CHRIST
FOR THE BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

Message One

God's Eternal Purpose to Produce the Church

Scripture Reading: Rev. 4:11; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 8:28

- I. “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created”—Rev. 4:11:**
- A. God's will is God's wish; God's will is what He wants to do—Eph. 1:9:
 - 1. God's good pleasure is of His will and is embodied in His will, so His will comes first—v. 5.
 - 2. God has made the mystery of His will known to us through His revelation in Christ, that is, through Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—v. 9; 3:9.
 - 3. God works all things according to the counsel of His will; God's will is His intention, and His counsel is His consideration of the way to accomplish His will or intention—1:11.
 - B. God is a God of purpose, having a will of His own pleasure—3:9-11; Col. 1:9.
 - C. He created all things for His will so that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose—Rev. 4:11; Rom. 8:28.
- II. The eternal purpose (lit., “the purpose of the ages”) was made by God in eternity past for eternity future—Eph. 3:11:**
- A. A purpose is a determined intent to do something or to gain something.
 - B. The purpose of the ages is the purpose of eternity, the eternal purpose.
 - C. In eternity past, before the foundation of the world, before the heavens, the earth, and all things were created, God made a purpose for something in the future, in eternity to come; therefore, it is called the purpose of eternity, the eternal purpose—1:4-5, 9, 11; 3:11.
 - D. The determined will of God became the purpose of God—1:5.
 - E. God's purpose is His determined intent to gain the church—vv. 9, 11.
 - F. God's purpose in creating man was that man would express Him and represent Him; the eternal purpose of God is to have a corporate man to express Him and represent Him—Gen. 1:26-27.
 - G. Creation was a part of God's original purpose, whereas redemption was remedial; redemption brings us back to God's eternal purpose—Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14.

III. God saved us and called us with a holy calling “according to His own purpose and grace”—2 Tim. 1:9:

- A. We need to view salvation from God’s perspective; the purpose of God’s salvation is for His created and redeemed ones to have the sonship, that is, to have the life of the Son and be conformed to the image of His Son so that the Son would be the Firstborn among many brothers—1 John 5:11-12; Rom. 8:29.
- B. God’s purpose is His plan according to His own will to put us into Christ and make us one with Him to share His life and position so that we may be His testimony—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30; 1 John 5:11-12.
- C. Grace is God’s provision in life given to us so that we may live out His purpose—John 1:14, 16-17.
- D. Salvation involves our being saved from a human life that is meaningless—Eccl. 1:2:
 - 1. The gospel of God saves us out of a human life that is without meaning into the meaning of the universe—Rev. 4:11.
 - 2. God created a man who had great meaning and purpose, but man fell, and the meaning of human life was lost.
 - 3. With His salvation, God rescues us and brings us back to our original purpose, which is the meaning of the universe—Rom. 8:28; 2 Tim. 1:9.

IV. God’s eternal purpose is to produce the church—Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:9-11; Rom. 8:28:

- A. Ephesians 3:10-11 reveals that the existence of the church is according to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord:
 - 1. The church was planned by God in eternity; before time began, in eternity, God purposed to have the church—1:4-5, 9, 11, 22-23.
 - 2. The existence of the universe is according to God’s eternal purpose to have the church—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9-11.
 - 3. In eternity past and for eternity to come, God planned and purposed to have the church in Christ and for Christ—vv. 10-11:
 - a. The church is not a temporary matter but an eternal matter in the eternal purpose of God; the church is the center and subject of God’s eternal plan.
 - b. God planned in eternity past to have the church, and He expects to have the church in eternity to come.
 - c. The church is in this age and throughout this age, yet it is from eternity past and for eternity future—Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Rev. 21:2, 9-11.
- B. God planned to have the church composed of regenerated and transformed human beings who are coordinated and built together as a corporate Body—Eph. 1:22-23; 2:21-22; 3:14-21:
 - 1. God planned that this corporate Body would be a corporate vessel into which He would work Himself—vv. 14-16.
 - 2. God’s purpose, His determined intention, is to have a corporate Body, a corporate vessel, with which He could mingle Himself and all that He has; this vessel is the church—4:4-6, 16.
 - 3. The church is dear, lovable, and precious to God because the church is His good pleasure, the desire of His heart—1:5, 9, 22-23.