

The Beauty of “My Church”: “The Household of God”

Focus Passage: Ephesians 2:11–22

Larger Context: Ephesians 2:1–10

Other Passages Referenced: Genesis 2:24–25; Matthew 27:35;

Sermon Recap

We glimpse the beauty of the Church in Ephesians 2. Paul contrasts who Church members used to be with who Jesus had recreated them to be. Gentiles, who were once separated from Christ, alienated from God’s people, strangers to God’s promises, Godless and without hope, have been brought near, given peace, made new, and have access to the God and Father of all creation.

The sermon highlighted three common contemporary attitudes that hide the beauty of the Church.

1. The Church exists to improve my life and so is viewed as a self-help agent.
2. The Church is not necessary for someone to have a personal relationship with Christ.
3. Differences with other Church members make it too frustrating to commit to a local church.

For some professing Christians, church is one item on their self-help playlist. Ephesians 2:4-5 reveal that we don’t need help, we need resurrection. The Bible is not a book of good advice. It is a book of good news about what God has done. We miss the beauty of the church when we don’t acknowledge how lost we were. The church is exceedingly more beautiful than a place to come and get life hacks and good advice, it is resurrected lives gathered to celebrate.

The idea of having a personal relationship with Christ that has no need of the Church is seen in the question, “Why would I want to be a part of the church, when I can just worship and pray to God directly myself?” Scripture teaches that each individual needs to personally repent and trust Jesus for salvation. However, the words “personal relationship with God” are not found anywhere in the Bible. God’s word is clear that any so-called personal relationship with God has public implications. Salvation involves two reconciliations or unions: union with God and union with others who have union with God.

We also miss the beauty of the Church when we let our frustrations with the Church prevent us from committing to it. Paul says that Christ’s work has made individual followers of Jesus into fellow citizens of the Kingdom of God as well as members of God’s household. God essentially turns believers into citizens and siblings that become a sanctuary in which He dwells. We don’t reject our citizenship when we are frustrated with our country. We don’t renounce our family members when we are frustrated by them. We will not fully mature in Christ without one another—even and especially without those who frustrate us most.

DON’T MISS THE BEAUTY OF THE CHURCH!

Interpretation Helps

- **“Therefore”** — A clever teaching aid states, “When we see the word “therefore” in the Bible, it is **there for** a reason. Rather than seeing “therefore” as a transition, we need to consider what was previously written that it refers to. “Therefore” often calls us to a truth that impacts how we are to think and live in the present.

- **“You”** — In English we use the same word “you” to describe both singular and plural pronouns without a way to distinguish between the two. That leads to creative regional attempts to clarify when someone means to address more than one person like “y’all”, “you’uns”, “yous guys”. In reading the Bible, the tendency for most in America is to see the word “you” and receive it as if the intended referent is “me.”

Group Gathering

Group Check-in — Care, Celebration, Encouragement (About 1/3 of meeting time)

1. Informal conversation to allow individuals to catch up with one another.
2. Ask if anyone would share how they’ve been hearing and obeying God’s direction.

Allow the Word to Speak — Be Hearers of the Word (About 1/3 of meeting time)

READ Ephesians 2:1–22

1. What from the passage or sermon was most impactful to you?
2. Were you left with any questions or confusion about the passage or sermon?
3. What truth(s) does “therefore” point to in Ephesians 2:11? Make a list of them.
4. Paul commands his readers to “remember” in Ephesians 2:11 and again in 2:12. What are they to remember?
5. The word “you” occurs 9 times in Ephesians 2, and every single time it is plural rather than singular. Find all 9 occurrences and check each one to see if reading it in the plural changes your understanding of what is being said.
6. To whom did Jesus reconcile us?

Put the Word into Practice — Be Doers of the Word (About 1/3 of meeting time)

1. Take some time to remember and reflect on who you were before coming to follow Jesus and then think on what He has done to reconcile you to Himself and others.
2. What strikes you about the three common attitudes mentioned in the sermon and recorded in the recap that keeps us from seeing the beauty of the Church? Do you need to confront or turn from any of those attitudes?
3. How does reading each of the passages of “you” as plural impact your understanding of God’s Church? Can you identify any adjustments you need to make to align your life with God’s design for His Church?
4. What are some things you can and will do to join together with others at Church to grown with fellow citizens and siblings into the sanctuary that God desires to form us into?

The Big Question: What do you sense God's Spirit saying to you and what concrete action will you take in response? Share your answer with the group or another trusted Christian and ask them to pray for you.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES: Click [here](#) for some good opportunities.

Don't miss the beauty of the church!

—*Eph. 2:11-22*

**⁴But God, being rich in mercy,
because of the great love
with which he loved us,
⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses,
made us alive together with Christ—
by grace you have been saved.**

Ephesians 2:4-5

**²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father
and his mother and hold fast to his wife,
and they shall become one flesh.**

**²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked
and were not ashamed.**

Genesis 2:24-25

**And when they had crucified him,
they divided his garments among them
by casting lots.**

Matthew 27:35

Attitudes that Hide the Church's Beauty

- **The church exists to improve my life**
- **The church isn't needed
for a personal relationship with God**
- **The church is just too frustrating
to be a part of**

**The church is citizens and siblings
built together as God's sanctuary**

**⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,
⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ
—by grace you have been saved—
⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**

⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

**⁹not a result of works, so that
no one may boast.**

**¹⁰For we are his workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand,
that we should walk in them.**

¹¹Therefore...

Ephesians 2:4-11a

“Can the surpassing power of God come into your life, and change your life, only individually, and not corporately? Can the power of God come into your life, and flow through your life if you are not willing to become deeply grafted into a community of love, truth, and mission? —Absolutely not.”

Tim Keller

Application:

**What attitude or practice
is hiding the beauty of the church
from your eyes?**