

BEYOND SUNDAY

Taking Sunday's Message Into The Week



Series: Why Church?

Message: We Are Family

Main Text: Ephesians 2:11-22

Beyond Sunday Guide

Main Idea

This week, Pastor Joseph Grant began our new Why Church? series by acknowledging a question many in our culture today are asking about the Church—primarily, “Why bother?” He said that perhaps one reason so many struggle with that question is because we've forgotten that the Church is more than a place where we gather—it is a family we belong to. Pastor shared a clip from this summer's Church of God General Assembly, where he witnessed thousands of people from different countries, cultures, languages, and backgrounds gathering together—people who may have never typically crossed paths, yet because of their faith in Christ, are all members of the family of God.

That connection took us to Ephesians 2, where Paul reminds the Church what Christ has done. Before Jesus, we were separated from God and without the hope and relationship we were created for. But thankfully, grace changed our position, allowing those who were once on the outside looking in to have a place within the family of God. Paul writes: “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:13).

Through Christ, those who were once far from God have been brought near, and thankfully, we don't make that journey alone—for the same grace that brings us into relationship with God also brings us into relationship with one another. Pastor shared the story about a special gift he and Heather once received—a map that illustrated the two separate paths they had traveled before eventually meeting and becoming united. In a much greater way, that is the story of every believer—that previously we were walking our own paths, but through Christ, we have been brought together as His people.

Paul brings the journey home by showing us that despite our differences, backgrounds, and experiences, through Christ, we are all members of the same family. He writes: “Now therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). Through Jesus, we have been brought near to God—and brought together with one another as His family.

Talk About It

1. This past Sunday, we followed three movements through Ephesians 2: Through Christ, those who were once out were brought in to God; those who were once divided have become united as one; and those who were once foreigners are now part of God's family. Which of those movements stands out most to you, and why?
2. Read Ephesians 2:13 again. What does it mean to you personally that, through Christ, someone who was once “far off” can now be brought near to God? How does that truth help us better understand what grace has done for us?
3. The message reminded us that Christ doesn't simply bring us near to God—He also brings us together with one another. In what ways can differences in background, cultures, experiences, opinions, personality, or even personal preferences sometimes create unnecessary distance between believers?
4. Read Ephesians 2:19 again. Paul says we are no longer strangers and foreigners, but members of God's household. What do you think is the difference between simply attending church and genuinely living as part of a church family?

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**“The Church is more than a place where we *gather*—
it is a *family* we belong to.”**

Make It Practical

1. Take a few moments to thank God for bringing you near. Think specifically about what Christ and His grace have changed in your relationship with God. Before moving on, name at least one thing you are thankful Christ has done for you, and take a moment to thank Him for bringing you from where you were into His family.
2. Our relationship with God isn't strengthened by trying to earn our place with Him—we already have access through Christ. But relationships grow through time and intentionality. Before moving on, identify one spiritual discipline you can put into practice this week. It may be setting aside time for prayer, spending more intentional time in Scripture, worshipping, fasting, or simply creating space in your day to be still before God. Choose one and make a plan to follow through.
3. Think about the people in your life and identify one relationship where distance may have become normal. It could involve a difference, disagreement, past hurt, or simply someone you have gradually become disconnected from. Then take a step toward unity this week—whether that means sending a text, making a phone call, offering encouragement, or simply choosing to move toward someone rather than continuing to keep your distance.
4. Identify one way to participate more intentionally in your church family this week. That may mean encouraging someone, strengthening a relationship, welcoming someone new, serving or volunteering in a ministry, or stepping into an opportunity to contribute. Choose how you are going to participate rather than simply spectate.
5. Before you leave this guide, identify one truth from Sunday's message that you don't want to leave behind. Don't simply choose something that sounded good—choose something you need to carry with you. Keep returning to that truth throughout the week and pay attention to how it shapes the way you relate to God and the people around you.

Prayer

Father, thank You for bringing me near through Jesus. Thank You for the grace that welcomed me into Your family when I was once far from You. Help me grow closer to You and never take for granted the relationship Christ has made possible. Show me where distance may exist in my relationships and give me the humility, wisdom, and courage to take steps toward unity. Help me not simply attend Your Church, but actively participate in the family You have placed me in—encouraging others, serving where I can, and helping people know they belong. As I move through this week, help me carry the truth of Your Word with me. May what You began speaking to me on Sunday continue shaping the way I live. In Jesus' name, Amen.